

The poster for the *Exploring Sacred Spaces* which took place in November. See the next page for the details of this event.

Exploring Sacred Spaces

AND GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEIGHBOURS

Week of 4th to 12th November 2017

Come along and join us as Auckland's diverse faith groups open their doors to introduce us to their faith and ways of worship!

KICK OFF OPENING CEREMONY Saturday 4th November at 2:30pm
Auradate Islamic Centre, 122 Brookhouse Bay Road, Avenisle
Visit any of the houses of worship below at the times listed.



Kick off Ceremony and Tour of Auckland Islamic Centre
122 Brookhouse Bay Road, Avenisle (enter via Tait Street)
Saturday 4th November 2:30pm - 4pm
Refreshments following, no shoes to be worn at worship area.



BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Hindu Temple)
21 Barnhead Place, Avenisle
Sunday 5th November 3pm - 4pm
Refreshments following, no shoes to be worn at worship area.



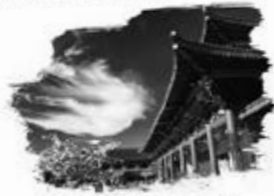
St Joseph's Catholic Church
10 Dominion Street, Takapuna
Tuesday 7th November 7pm - 8pm
Refreshments following.



Gurudwara Nanakhar (Sikh Temple)
100-106 Great South Road, Manurewa
Wednesday 8th November 7pm - 8:30pm
Remove shoes at entrance. Head coverings will be provided (or bring your own). Wear loose clothing for sitting on the carpeted floor. Refreshments following.



Holy Trinity Cathedral (Anglican)
Cnr St Stephens Avenue & Parnell Road, Parnell
Friday 10th November 7pm - 8pm
Refreshments following.



Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple
18 Stancombe Road, Flat Bush
Saturday 11th November 11am - 12pm
Dress code: long pants and long-sleeved tops requested.
Crate/Cafe available for buying drinks following the tour.
Assemble in entry lobby of main building.



Al-Mustafa Jamia Masjid (Muslim)
26 Alangone Road, Mangere
Sunday 12th November 2:30pm - 3:30pm
Refreshments following.

Initiative of the Auckland Inter-Faith Council
www.aucklandinterfaithcouncil.org.nz
or contact raabk@gmail.com

Our Auckland communities are made up of many different religions, faiths — and people of no faith. Everybody is welcome as we are invited to get to know our neighbours better!!!

Exploring Sacred Space

A recent initiative of the Auckland Inter-Faith Council (AIFC) was the idea of exploring sacred spaces and getting to know our neighbours. Ruth Cleaver, the President of the Auckland Inter-Faith Council, welcomed interested people to the first visit with the following speech ...

We all are aware that Auckland is a very ethnically and religiously diverse city, but we may not be aware that it is considered **THE** most ethnically diverse city in the world! Also when you look at the most recent census (2013), you will see that of all the urban areas in New Zealand, Auckland is the only one 'trending up' in terms of the number of people who tick that they have some religious affiliation.

So what does this mean to the average Aucklander, who may or may not be religious? It means that within the everyday fabric of our lives – in the neighbourhood, at our local school, at work, in shops, at the hospital, wherever we interact with others, we **WILL** come into contact with people who have religious beliefs different to our own. This can cause feelings of mistrust, separation, marginalisation, even fear.

On the other hand it creates opportunities – to learn about the world's faiths, which have contributed so much to human culture and development; to understand how other people think, what their values are, and how they are striving to better themselves. It can offer opportunities for spiritual growth and insight – and can help us understand our own paradigm more clearly when we are forced to look at how others view life and the big questions we **ALL** face.

The key is understanding, and to understand we need to interact on a deeper level, to dialogue, to experience the reality of the other to some

continues 

degree. This is the motivation behind this initiative, which we hope to make an annual project. Creating a time where curious people can visit the sacred spaces of a faith community, learn about what goes on, meet some of the members, and experience some hospitality. We see this as a potential first step toward building understanding and connections. We are doing our best to encourage neighbouring faith communities to take advantage of these visits as a way of creating relationship between faith groups, finding ways to explore their common goals or values, perhaps by serving the larger community, or at least by creating networks of understanding and fellowship amongst themselves.

After the Exploring Sacred Spaces event, Ruth made these comments ...

The overall feedback was that the participants were very grateful for the opportunity to visit these places, and the hosts genuinely enjoyed welcoming guests into their respective spiritual homes. Visitors enjoyed seeing the beauty of the various venues and appreciated the chance to get an introduction to the respective faiths and ways of worship. The schedule allowed people to stay on after the official tours and speak with members of the host organisations as well as fellow visitors.

Auckland Inter-Faith Council is looking at ways to continue and expand this project and invites expressions of interest from faith communities, civic organisations, and other like-minded groups. For more information please contact us.



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