



- Barnes Close Conference Centre
- Personal Retreats
- Romania Concern
- Footprints (in former Yugoslavia)
- Un-Afr-Aid (United Africa Aid)
- Afghanistan

**Newslink
October
2017**

From The Community Coordinator:

August has been very quiet at Barnes Close but it has given me a chance to recover from the procedure to fit a pacemaker on 3rd August. I have recovered well and feel full of energy. On a wider front we continue to be concerned about the refugee crisis in Europe, the political situation in the USA, Kenya, Syria, Iraq and many more places. Prayers for peace are needed as much now as they ever were.



News from Barnes Close

We continue to be blessed by a constant stream of wonderful international volunteers. Currently we have Marlene from Germany and Mate from Romania. Bob, our Assistant Chef, left at the end of July but Lisa, Sarah & Ian are able to cope with current bookings. Jodie has finished her term as Assistant Coordinator and has started training at Queen's Birmingham for the Anglican priesthood.

What's On at Barnes Close

Reflection Days Thursday, 9th November,
14th December, 11th January, 8th February
Cost: £15 per day (includes lunch)

Community Evening at Barnes Close
6.00pm Prayer 6.30pm Meal 7.15pm Meeting
Mon 13th November with Trustees
Monday 11th December with Membership

Constance Coltman Centenary Celebration Wednesday 18th October 3pm
Film, Afternoon Tea, Conversation.

Pre-Advent Retreat Tuesday 28th to Thursday 30th November
Cost £150 waged (£125 unwaged)

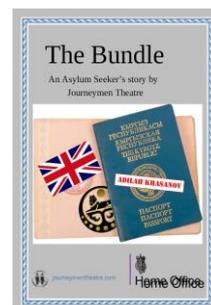
Christmas Dinners 1st to 20th December
Barnes Close is the perfect setting for your Christmas Dinner. Whilst enjoying splendid views across Worcestershire you can relax in our comfortable lounge with Christmas Tree and real log fire.

Personal service is assured as we only take one booking per meal time. Tea and coffee can be served on arrival and at the end of the meal.

The Bundle Sunday 10th December 3pm
Based closely on the story of a real woman and her three young children, The Bundle follows Adilah's domestic persecution and denial of human rights in Chechnya. Removed from her Russian homeland by her Chechen father, abducted into a forced marriage and then subjected to a life of servitude, she takes the ultimate risk in plotting her escape to the UK.

Open Christmas Tuesday 19th December 7pm

Please contact Ian for booking forms and further information



CfR Afghanistan Update from Owain Bell

With the successful transfer of £ 1,200.00 to Rahela in the Panjshir Valley earlier this summer our financial commitment to Afghanistan and to the children of the former Astana School comes to an end. I hope, however, that through our contact, Arghawan Akbari, we will be able to receive news from time to time and be open to requests for help when practicable.

What we have been able to contribute over the last five years or so to the education of girls and boys in this impoverished and war-torn country is an occasion for heartfelt thanksgiving.

It has been a privilege to work in partnership with the “Afghan Mother and Child Rescue” too and with Roddy, Peter and Annabel whose resourcefulness and courage has been inspiring. We mourn the passing over the last twelve months of both Peter and Roddy but thank God for the warmth of their humanity. How loved they were, these old soldiers, in the villages and hillsides of the Panjshir Valley! And how eloquent the photos taken for us by Annabel.



Our contributions, I know, made all the difference in keeping the Astana School going and if the doors of Astana itself are now closed it is because Rahela, the indomitable headteacher, has taken the children and the school into a larger institution in a town close by which promises an even richer curriculum for the children. The work very much goes on.

One highlight of this project was our “Afghanistan Day” held on 28th March 2015 where we heard firsthand accounts of our work from Roddy, Annabel and Shir Akbari. Ian described this as one of the best “days” he could remember.

The late Canon David Rogers wrote: “The situation in Afghanistan remains fragile and uncertain. But in a corner of it, the beautiful area called the Panjshir Valley, there are verdant hillsides and a vibrant school thanks to the sacrifice and effort of people of astonishing tenacity- truly a symbol of hope” Amen to that.

And thank you, everyone, for supporting this work with such enthusiasm and commitment.

CfR Footprints Update by Clive Fowle

1 Good news

Keith Drinkwater, member of Nuneaton Methodist Church and experienced treasurer has agreed to be treasurer.

2 Recent activities

Facilitators’ training August 11th to 13th and September 22nd to 24th

With funding from the Ecumenical Women’s Initiative in Croatia, training workshops over a weekend were held for 16 participants on each workshop. The group composition is very good with participants from Vukovar, Osijek, Baranja, Novi Sad, professional, non professional retired and working, Serb and Croat, Hungarian, Ruthenian, Greek Catholic, Methodist, Evangelical, non-Church attender. Workshops were a mixture of input from Nena, Judith and myself and group exercises. In the September workshop, their ‘homework’ from the previous workshop was for participants to split into 4 groups and each group had to prepare a one-hour long workshop to present to the group. Themes were, the role of games in workshops, the role of Conflict Resolution in workshops, the role of Story and teamwork in workshops. Feedback was given by trainers and the group. The groups did very well and participants are now considering planning workshops in their own communities with supervision from Nena. They are of course all welcome to help the Team deliver



training in whatever country a workshop is held. They are all very enthusiastic and dedicated. Included in the funding was a commitment to producing a Facilitation manual, written by the Team.

Nena and I are convinced that the main reason why the group members relate so well to each other is because of the UK Study visit. So Nena and I both feel we need to have another UK Study visit next year.

I feel that my role is to support the Facilitators and work with them to gain more experience and knowledge.

As Facilitators run workshop activities in their own communities, I am urging them to seek local funding. However, CFR Footprints will have to make some funding available for workshop activities where there is difficulty in securing local funding.

3 Future Activities and plans

13th to 16th October 3rd Residential workshop for Bosnia group to be held in Split. Theme 'The Wounded Healer'.

28th October Church and Peace conference in Birmingham. I am one of the speakers.

3rd to 5th November Final workshop for Unit 1 in Croatia on Reconciliation .

10th to 12th November Methodist Conference in Grange over Sands. Lead speaker together with Revd Brian Brown who is speaking on South Africa and Israeli-Palestinian issues.

13th November Rugby Inter-Faith Forum Annual Lecture on Forgiveness.

1st December . Taking part in a webinar in Dolgellau on the role of Listening in Reconciliation.

In 2018

Two Further workshops in Bosnia on Forgiveness and Reconciliation.

Unit 2 in Croatia

Study visit to Barnes Close.

Work in Serbia with Methodist Church and Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation (EHO) and possibly in Zemun ,Belgrade working with Marijana.

3 Funding

I am delighted to report that Radford Road Church in Leamington Spa have agreed to raise £1000 by next August for our work in Bosnia. Dorn and Judith spoke about our new work there at the launch of the fund raising.

4 Other items

The two manuals will be formatted by Marija Hudak in Novi Sad, as she works in publishing. More needs to be done on the Workshop manual to ensure clarity of usage and translation by Nena. This is very time consuming but need to get it right!

Carol has completed a much needed update of the display board.

The Newsletter is going out very soon.

Website being updated.

CfR Romania Concern Update from Ian Ring

We continue to support the parish of Arad-Gai in its social, community and youth work and I will visit in November. During this visit I will also meet with Bishop Csury of the Reformed Church in Romania. Mate Antal is spending three months at Barnes Close this Autumn. Mate is the son of a former volunteer Janos Antal who is now the Ecumenical Officer of the Reformed Church in Romania



CfR East Africa Update from Jan Scott

It is always good to hear news from our friends and partners in East Africa. They all carry out amazing work in very difficult situations.

PHARP Kenya is the Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP) that we have been supporting for many years. This year has been challenging due to the recent elections and associated violence. PHARP workshops have focussed on empowering women to register to vote and to take an active part in the way their country is governed. Peace-building and reconciliation workshops continue in many parts of the country. With the recent news that the result of the election has been overruled and another election will take place on 17th October, our prayers are requested. There have been outbreaks of violence and people have been killed as a result.

Maji Mazuri: its mission is to alleviate poverty by empowering people to transform their own lives. The **Children's Centre** continues to support 42 children who receive care, physiotherapy, education and life skills training. 23 are special needs children and others are in school or college. The physiotherapy department has been upgraded with new equipment recently.

Kiserian Farm: Ten Acres are currently under lease and Maji Mazuri staff are farming one acre of land.



Maji Mazuri Projects in Mathare Valley

Headstart Academy The school currently has 545 pupils. Besides offering basic education the school continues to offer a meal a day to all the pupils. Talent is also nurtured through sports, music and poetry clubs. The school is in the process of fundraising for a new permanent school building which will enable more pupils to be admitted. The school also needs support in the feeding program, stationary, child sponsorship and staff salaries.

Teen's group: The teen's group talent program continues to shine to the national level through their poetry team which currently performs at the Kenya National Theatre and the National Museum monthly.

Green Heroes: The team continues with their weekly garbage collection activity in the community every month.

Maji Mazuri Youth Group: The program continues to empower youth socially and economically through organizing capacity building programs to equip the youth with relevant job market skills as well as life skills to enable them connect to the job market or become entrepreneurs.

On 15th July the youth group held a community peace concert within Mathare constituency to preach peace ahead of the Kenyan general election. The event started with a peace walk in the community followed by the concert.

PHARP Rwanda: You will remember our appeal for funds to buy goats for the community at Rukumbura. Thank you for all your contributions - the goats have been bought and we have photographs of them with the community.

We now have a request for pigs for a different community. Farming pigs will make a big difference to the economy of this village, so we are now raising £900 for pigs. If you would like to contribute, please contact Ian at Barnes Close.

Initiative Communautaires pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté au Burundi (ICRP): In an increasingly volatile and dangerous country, ICRP continue to offer support with farming to enable people to have enough to eat.

Prayer Points:

- For all these projects, as they seek to bring reconciliation to their own communities.
- For peace and security leading up to the Kenyan election on 17th October.
- For the young people of the Mathare Valley, keeping them safe from violence
- For the communities in Rwanda who need pigs and that CfR will be able to raise the £900 for them.
- For safety for the ICRP team in Burundi.

Goats- Rukambura. May 18,2017

Dear Jan,

Grace and peace be with you, your family, and all the friends from the Community For Reconciliation. We hope that you are doing well with your family and our prayer is that God keeps all our friends safe. I am attaching pictures of the group of Rukambura receiving goats. The event took place this last Thursday – 18th May. It was delayed by rainfalls during the months of February, March and April, but also by events of genocide commemoration in different parts of the Country. So we couldn't access markets to purchase the goats. We had to wait for a convenient time. This is the group that you visited in the South, including people living with HIV. The message they gave to Julienne and I to pass on to you is- that the love and blessing you have given them has filled their hearts with joy and

hope and that they will share this by passing on goats to others as they multiply. The group, majority of which are women meets every Wednesday to crafts to generate some income. Many thanks, dear Jan, for your visit and for raising the money to bless our vulnerable group with goats. We have other vulnerable groups in need of our support and we keep on praying to God to open doors. One of them is a group in North-west, in a remote rural place. The group is made of genocide survivors and the perpetrators. It is a nice reconciliation group. We brought them together, we trained them and we keep doing follow up, but we have failed to help them with pigs which they requested. Somebody had give us a promise that he would give money for the pigs but he went through difficult times and couldn't help. It is a large group of 45 people and about GBP 900 is our prayer request to give them pigs. We have revived and updated our website. You can see more of our activities on www.pharp-rwanda.org May God bless you richly. Our greeting to Rebecca

Anastase



Finance Update

Thank you to all who have recently sent donations to sustain our work. Without your help the work of CfR would not happen.

Refugees & Asylum Seekers – Rebecca Scott

There are currently more than 65 million people in the world who have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to war, violence or persecution. Of those, more than 22 million have had to leave their home country, crossing a border and in doing so, becoming a refugee. Almost a quarter of those refugees are currently living in just three countries. Despite what the media might have you believe, the UK is not one of them. In fact, until very recently, not a single European country appeared in the top 10 countries hosting refugees worldwide. The top 3 countries are Turkey (2.9m refugees), Pakistan (1.4m refugees) and Lebanon, where one in four people was a refugee at the end of 2015.

In the UK, our asylum system requires people fleeing war, violence or persecution to declare themselves to the state as an asylum seeker. They can do this at any port of entry by speaking to an immigration official, or at the Home Office processing centre in Croydon. While the Home Office considers their claim, the person is an 'asylum seeker'. They are allocated housing on a no-choice basis, provided with a small allowance (currently £36.95 per week), and do not have the right to work. The asylum process can take a very long time – up to 20 years in some cases – and an asylum seeker is liable to be detained or removed from the country at any point while their case is being considered. The UK is the only country in the EU where an asylum seeker can be detained indefinitely.

The right to claim asylum in a safe country is set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the UK has signed up to. It is therefore not possible to be an 'illegal asylum seeker'. Unfortunately terms get mixed up in the media, mixing up asylum seekers, who are here because they fear for their lives at home, with all sorts of other migrants. When an asylum seeker receives a positive decision from the Home Office, giving them the right to remain in the UK, they are granted 'refugee' status. This can be for 2.5 years, 5 years, or in very rare cases, indefinitely.

Refugees have the right to work, must pay UK taxes, and can claim benefits. They can move house to be closer to friends or family in another part of the UK. However, their problems are not over. Depending on their status, they may have to reapply for refugee status somewhere down the line. They may face other barriers to settling and integrating, such as language, discrimination or lack of knowledge about UK systems. Despite this, asylum seekers and refugees contribute a great deal to their new communities, often volunteering with local charities, sharing their food and culture, or helping their neighbour.

The Community for Reconciliation has supported those caught up in the 'refugee crisis' by providing grants to organisations working in Croatia and Serbia with people in refugee camps there. We will also be hosting a performance of 'The Bundle', the story of a Chechnyan refugee now living in the UK. We hope you will be able to come to this event and discuss refugee and asylum issues with us in more detail.

News from Partner Organisations

Church and Peace

Peace Church in a world of conflict? Answering the biblical call to nonviolence.

Saturday 28th October, 10.30 – 16.00

Quaker Meeting House, 40 Bull St, Birmingham B4 6AF

The event is free of charge.

A vegetarian soup and sandwich lunch can be booked at a cost of £7.00.

Registration and further information Contact Barbara Forbes - forbesbarbarae@yahoo.co.uk To register, please send us your name, contact details and the name of your church/meeting/organisation, as applicable. Individual participants are of course also welcome. Please register by 20th October

A regional gathering on the way to the Church and Peace international conference 21–24 June 2018 at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire.

Church and Peace brings together Christian communities, congregations, study centres, peace organisations, and individuals across Europe who are committed to becoming a peace church. Its members seek to live out the Gospel call to nonviolence through shared worship, theological reflection, and practical action for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

One World Week 22nd to 29th October 2017

Theme: Good Neighbours - My World Depends on Us

Being a "good neighbour" means much more than just being quiet and unobtrusive. It includes (according to various faith traditions) actively looking out for our neighbours to ensure their needs are met. It has applications at the personal, local, national and international level. This theme will involve discussion about who our neighbours are in this 21st century world as we ask: **"What do we need to do to be a good neighbour in a globalised world?"** The strap line, *"My World Depends on Us"*, reminds us that our personal world is directly affected by what we do, purchase, read, say, consume, vote, ... and that this does not happen in isolation. Our life depends on how we impact on and influence others in our common experience at home and in the world.

Pause For Thought

If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Words of Jesus Christ as recorded by Luke in his gospel.

Contacting the Community for Reconciliation:

☒: www.cfrbarnesclose.co.uk

✉ cfrenquiry@aol.com

☎ 01562 710231 (answerphone available)

☒ CfR, Barnes Close, Chadwich, Bromsgrove, Worcs B61 0RA

Barnes Close Office hours: Monday - Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm