

ENGAGING ISSUES

Exploring Issues in Society

Our Purposes:

*To keep in our minds the
connectedness and interdependence
of human life on this fragile planet.*

*To promote the strong belief that
all are our neighbours and share a
common future.*

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Challenge	Discussion
Dialogue	Tolerance
Openness	Respect
Learning	Understanding
Development	Difference
Independence	Critical Thinking
Spirituality	Communication
Humanism	Building Bridges
Sharing	Contemporary Issues

*A forum for the exploration of
beliefs and positions.*

Q. What is Engaging Issues?

A... Engaging Issues is a forum for everyone who wants to consider significant social, ethical, spiritual and religious issues of our day. It aspires to be an open, inclusive, questioning assembly, where we can speak our minds freely and respectfully. It may challenge our assumptions and can be uncomfortable in the pursuit of encouraging greater understanding, integrity and tolerance of differing views.

Q Where?

A... Meetings take place in **The United Reformed Church, High Street, Church Stretton, SY6 6BY**

Q... When?

A...From 7.30pm - 9.00 pm usually on alternate Tuesday evenings during the Autumn and Winter months

Q... How Much?

A... a suggested donation of £3 an evening.

Organised and published by a non-profit making, small and informal group of local friends with only small axes to grind.

Further details from

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www.engagingissues.org.uk



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For the 15th Season - October 2019 to February 2020

October 15th. Helen Drewery
Disagreeing Respectfully

Our public discourse appears to be moving inexorably to the hostilities of 'us' and 'them' and in tones of anger and bitterness. Can we find a different way? For many years Helen Drewery worked in Friends House, the Quaker offices in London, where she had oversight of the many managed projects working to build peace in troubled parts of the world. She was also involved with Quaker work at the United Nations. Recently retired, she brings this wealth of experience to think globally about the art of disagreeing respectfully.

November 19th. Paul West
Policing Today and in the Future -

'Reflections - career highs and lows, achievements and regrets of a former Chief Constable.'

Paul has 32 years of policing experience and was Chief Constable of West Mercia Police for 8 years. He has led nationally on matters concerning professional standards, police misconduct, management of sexual and violent offenders. Paul was awarded the Queen's Police Medal for distinguished service in 2005. He has been an independent member of the Judicial Appointments Commission since 2012.

January 21st. David Woolgar
Good Energy & Bad Science

David is an engineer, environmentalist and is currently a consultant advising green energy producers. His talk will look at the background to the energy crisis and the scope of the challenge for the UK and globally. How has the current UK plan evolved and does it solve the trilemma of security, affordability and sustainability? What are the challenges from an engineer's perspective? How much wind and solar capacity do we need? Will we have to give up gas central heating? Is burning biomass really green? David will steer us through some of the issues and take your questions.

October 29th. Julie Siddiqi
Muslims Are People Too -

Encountering people as people, instead of people as issues.

Julie is a passionate advocate for honest, meaningful, community-building cooperation and understanding with people from various faith communities in the UK. She is a co-founder of the Jewish and Muslim Women's Network, and formerly Executive Director of the Islamic Society of GB. Julie will lead us through the complexities of interaction between people of various faiths and none, looking at how we can respect differences and move towards authentic relaxed relationships in our mixed communities.

December 3rd. Mark Rowland
Inclusion and Equal Marriage

Mark Rowland is a Methodist Minister currently serving as Free Church Chaplain to the University of Warwick. Mark is active in work for LGBT+ inclusion, and in leadership of the Dignity and Worth group supporting the proposal currently under consideration by the national Methodist Church to allow same-sex marriage in church. In this talk, Mark explores what the future holds in many areas of prejudice and inclusion for Christian churches in Britain, and poses some challenging questions.

February 4th. David Morton
Ireland, Brexit and the Peace Process

David is the operations manager for Quaker Service based in Belfast. Quakers were somewhat unique during the Irish troubles; being viewed as neutral and deeply trusted, Friends were often able to support and serve where others were not. The Good Friday Agreement is now more than 20 years old, and whilst it brought peace and prosperity for the majority, there remains a desperately vulnerable and disadvantaged minority still experiencing fear and violence. Living in the shadow of the peace walls dividing Belfast's interfaces, the implications of Brexit add yet more fear and uncertainty for these communities.

November 5th. Robbie Kerry
Ethical Issues Around Assisted Dying

We have no control over our birth; to what extent should we have control over our death? How should we care for those who are suffering, but for whom there are no cures?

Should doctors and health care professionals seek to prolong life at all costs? What rights do I have to determine treatment, and what if I am no longer able to make my wishes known?

Dr. Kerry is a consultant and head of anaesthetics at Horton General Hospital, Banbury.

January 7th. Mark Michaels
Judaism, Israel and Antisemitism -

'One Jew's view from the Marches.'

Mark Michaels says that he is not a 'typical Jew', if there is such a thing. He grew up in North West London but moved to Montgomery in 1990 - a very long way from a Synagogue. Judaism is an odd mixture of Religion, Culture, Heritage and Race with, for some, affinity for Israel thrown in too. For each the mix is different and for many it may vary from day to day. Mark offers a frank description of his own mix, his views on Israeli politics, relationships with the Palestinians and the rise of antisemitism.

February 18th. David Wiseman
The Violence of Certainty

Ordained for nearly 40 years, with almost all of his ministry spent in urban/inner city parishes, David's last stipendiary post was as Area Dean of Greater Northampton and Priest in Charge of Christ Church, Northampton. His talk is inspired by the thinking of Revd Roger Hooker, and will explore the insights that a deep encounter with Hinduism and especially the rise of Hindu nationalism can give in a world where many acts of violence appear motivated by a certainty that denies a place for divergent opinions, faiths or political viewpoints.