The EU Referendum

Materials to support schools in the aftermath

2016
Materials To Support Schools In The Aftermath Of The EU Referendum

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Pastoral letter to be read in all churches at the principal service of Sunday 19th June 2016

My brothers and sisters in Christ

On Thursday 16th June a Member of Parliament was killed on the streets of her constituency in West Yorkshire. Not only is this a tragedy for Jo Cox’s young family but it has united people of good will throughout the nation in sorrow. I commend Jo Cox, her family, friends and constituents to your prayers as well as all who serve in public office and positions of trust and responsibility in our nation.

On Thursday 23rd June, those registered to vote in the referendum on our membership of the European Union will have the opportunity to take part in a historic decision. To do so is a civic duty, an act of commitment to the work of democracy as it has developed over many generations in this country. The right to vote has been hard won and not everyone in the world today has this right.

As Christians we are called to be Christ-centred, which means being outward focussed. This means taking our civic responsibilities seriously and playing our part in building community. It means we should exercise our duty to vote. I would not presume to dictate how you should vote, but I would ask you to consider: how do we want to forge our identity and live with each other? What sort of place should our nation be and how do we wish to foster interdependency and work together for peace and justice between nations?

Lastly, I would plead for one other thing: mutual respect. There are reasonable arguments and people of good will on both sides in this referendum. Either view can be held in good conscience. But the tone of the debate has often failed to reflect this. Whichever way the issue is decided, we must seek unity to follow together the path that the majority chooses. My prayer is that we would strive to speak well of one another, both during the campaign and after. Whatever happens, we will continue to tell the story of our faith in Christ Jesus in whom we are all one, all children of God.

Whichever decision you prayerfully reach, to leave or to remain, I do urge you to go out and vote.

+Christopher
Bishop of Southwark
This 19th day of June in the year of Our Lord 2016
EU referendum: Statement by Archbishops of Canterbury and York

Friday 24th June 2016

Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop John Sentamu have issued this joint statement after the UK voted to leave the European Union:

On Thursday, millions of people from across the United Kingdom voted in the referendum, and a majority expressed a desire that Britain’s future is to be outside the European Union.

The outcome of this referendum has been determined by the people of this country. It is now the responsibility of the Government, with the support of Parliament, to take full account of the outcome of the referendum, and, in the light of this, decide upon the next steps. This morning, the Prime Minister David Cameron has offered a framework for when this process might formally begin.

The vote to withdraw from the European Union means that now we must all reimagine both what it means to be the United Kingdom in an interdependent world and what values and virtues should shape and guide our relationships with others.

As citizens of the United Kingdom, whatever our views during the referendum campaign, we must now unite in a common task to build a generous and forward looking country, contributing to human flourishing around the world. We must remain hospitable and compassionate, builders of bridges and not barriers. Many of those living among us and alongside us as neighbours, friends and work colleagues come from overseas and some will feel a deep sense of insecurity. We must respond by offering reassurance, by cherishing our wonderfully diverse society, and by affirming the unique contribution of each and every one.

The referendum campaign has been vigorous and at times has caused hurt to those on one side or the other. We must therefore act with humility and courage – being true to the principles that make the very best of our nation. Unity, hope and generosity will enable us to overcome the period of transition that will now happen, and to emerge confident and successful. The opportunities and challenges that face us as a nation and as global citizens are too significant for us to settle for less.

As those who hope and trust in the living God, let us pray for all our leaders, especially for Prime Minister David Cameron in his remaining months in office. We also pray for leaders across Europe, and around the world, as they face this dramatic change. Let us pray especially that we may go forward to build a good United Kingdom that, though relating to the rest of Europe in a new way will play its part amongst the nations in the pursuit of the common good throughout the world.
NEWS RELEASE

28 June 2016

The EU Referendum - supporting one another and bridge building:
Statement from the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK

On Friday, the results of the European Union Referendum were announced. The UK has voted, by a majority of overall numbers of votes cast, to leave the European Union.

There are rapidly moving discussions and strongly held views on the issue.

An immediate need is extending support to those who have been targeted with abuse in the wake of the vote, including some members of the Polish community and also people from other ethnicities and of a number of faiths, including Muslim and Sikh. This abuse and hostility is entirely at odds with the values of tolerance, valuing of diversity, and mutual respect. IFN’s member bodies, like many others around the UK, will no doubt be finding ways to reach out and to be supportive at this difficult time.

We are entering a period when the need for bridge building within society will be more important than ever. Faith and inter faith organisations have an extremely important role to play in this as well as in contributing to the debate about future identity of the UK.

Notes for editors

1. Press queries to Inter Faith Network: tel 020 7730 0410; email ifnet@interfaith.org.uk

2. The Inter Faith Network for the UK www.interfaith.org.uk was founded in 1987 to advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of the different faith communities in Britain and to promote good relations between people of different faiths in this country. It works with its member bodies and others to carry out these aims.

3. Member bodies of the Inter Faith Network include: national faith community representative bodies; national, regional and local inter faith bodies; and academic institutions and educational bodies concerned with inter faith issues. A list of member bodies can be found at http://www.interfaith.org.uk/members.

4. A copy of this statement by the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs and of the Inter Faith Network’s policy on The Making of Network Statements can be found at http://interfaith.org.uk/resources/statements-and-messages.
Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, said:

"I believe that Britain is better off within the European Union, but the British people have clearly spoken today, and their democratic will must now be fulfilled.

"I would like to praise David Cameron for the dignified way he has reacted to the message sent by the British people in his words at Downing Street today. I agree with the Prime Minister that Britain can survive and prosper outside the European Union.

"I want to send a clear message to the British people and to businesses and investors around the world this morning - there is no need to panic.

"I still believe that our country is better off within the European Union, but there is no doubt that London will continue to be the successful city it is today. Our city and our country will continue to be the best place in the world to do business. And we will continue to look outwards and trade and engage with the entire world - including the European Union.

"Although we will be outside the EU, it is crucial that we remain part of the single market. Leaving the single market of 500 million people - with its free-trade benefits - would be a mistake. I will be pushing the Government to ensure this is the cornerstone of the negotiations with the EU. It is crucial that London has a voice at the table during those renegotiations, alongside Scotland and Northern Ireland.

"We all have a responsibility to now seek to heal the divisions that have emerged throughout this campaign - and to focus on that which unites us, rather than that which divides us.

"I want to send a particular message to the almost one million Europeans living in London, who make a huge contribution to our city - working hard, paying taxes and contributing to our civic and cultural life. You are welcome here. We value the enormous contribution you make to our city and that will not change as a result of this referendum."
KEY STAGE 1 – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Starter/discussion
- Different images of the story of The Good Samaritan – ranges from different cultural heritages.
- Images around the room that the children can look at – discuss similarities and differences. Teacher explains that the pictures look different but they are the same Good Samaritan by He Qi.

Main activity
Jesus’ greatest commandment – Love thy neighbour
Read story from Bible/video – animation
Discuss the story and theme. Unpack the fact that the only person who helped was their enemy/group they disliked.

The EU Referendum recently took place – some people voted leave/some voted remain. From this people have been divided and people have used unkind words about each other.

Show news clip/video of Polish Community Centre – unkind words that were written. Pause and discuss. What would you do? How would you have felt? What would Jesus do? Show rest of video with messages of love/flowers/heart. Out of hatred, goodness and love shone through. Link to story. People passed on by but one showed love and compassion.

Children to write a message/or make a card/voice box – video message. From the point of view of the people who passed on by. Saying sorry and what they would have done differently.

Plenary/reflection
Play Big family of God as activity carried out – Nick & Becky Blake. Each child is given a small square piece of paper to draw their own face on. They bring them to the front and create a class collage of togetherness – the Big Family of God. We all come from different places but we are all part of a community together.
SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Developing Church of England Education

KEY STAGE 2 – ADDRESSING HATE CRIME

This KS2 lesson has been prepared following the EU referendum and ensuing violence following Britain’s vote to leave the European Union. There has been an increase in reporting of hate crimes and we want to address this issue in the lesson.

You could display the AT1 and AT2 over some images of difficult and divisive headlines or use the notebook attached. Please avoid giving politically biased views and opinions.

**AT1 Understand some ideas about love from different faiths**

**AT2 Reflect on how we can show love in different areas of our lives**

**Opener:**

*Philosophical question / discussion*

**What is love? What is hate?**

Ideas for activities:

Sugar paper responses – move around the room, group discussion, post-its, write with whiteboard pen on the table top, put paper under the table and go underneath to record responses.

**Whole class activity:**

**Feely bag - scrolls of religious quotes (see attached.)**

Class teacher may say something like, “In the spirit of embracing diversity, we are going to end up in mixed groups and we are going to work with cooperation together with whomever we are put with – it’s completely down to chance – each scroll is a special scroll and each group will be a special group.”

You could use a pillowcase, a hat etc.

Children take a rolled scroll each, read quotes and have some time for reflection and feedback.

*What do you think about your quote?*

*Do you agree? Disagree? Why?*

Children go and join other classmates with same quote

You could put the symbol for each religion in a space in the classroom and children move to their group.

**Group activity:**

**Children to develop a response/expression to their group quote**

Ideas for responses:

Drama – come up with a sketch or freeze frame

Art – poster, drawing, graffiti art

Music – compose a rap, song

Poetry

Think about using ICT to record – photographs or videos

Have a sharing time
Plenary/reflection activity:

**Children to reflect on what they’ve seen and learnt today and come up with three pledges**
You could play an instrumental piece while the children come up with their pledges

*Pledge to show and share love in different places and ways*
- Within yourself
- Within your family
- Within your school

*Think about the marginalised/different people around you and try to make one of your pledges directed towards this person/these people*

Provide hearts for children to record their pledges onto

**Ideas:**
- White paper/card hearts mounted on newspaper hearts (link to the idea of current affairs)

End with a class prayer.
“True love is born from understanding.”

The Buddha - Buddhism

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude sins.”

The Bible - Christian

“No-one is my enemy
No-one is a foreigner
With all I am at peace.”

Guru Nanak – Sikh

“Where there is love, there is life.”

Gandhi – Hindu

“I should become one with you and you would become one with me. (…) Then no one would be able to say that I am different from you or that you are different from me.”

Muslim scholar – Islam
COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Unity in Uniqueness

As children enter, give out seven pieces of an eight-part puzzle/picture to hold discreetly.

Gather: Play Gary Barlow’s ‘Sing’ (‘Sing it louder, sing it clearer’) while children come in.

Engage
Acting: Adult from school community stands. Little child comes along and whispers, “Excuse me.” Adult looks around but doesn’t see them. (Opportunity for children to dress reflecting a range of cultures) More children come along and together (approx. 5/6) say together, “Excuse me!” so that the adult hears, moves out of the way and gathers them in together. All sit down in a circle holding hands.

Read: 1 Cor.12 passage – Unity and diversity in the body.
  o Explain that the Bible talks about different parts of one body working together – different roles of equal value and importance
  o Link to the EU Referendum, explain that whilst the majority of the country no longer wish to be part of the European Union, a lot of people did still wish to belong to Europe. Even though the United Kingdom is are not going to be part of the European Union, we are nevertheless still a diverse and rich community, rich in all the different people that make up our country and community. This diversity is to be embraced and celebrated.

Sing: ‘I have a song to sing’ (teach to children first/ask group of children to come to front and lead.)
  o During singing invite the seven children to bring up their piece of the puzzle/picture and try to piece together, (1 missing.)
  o Discuss significance of puzzle (link back to passage – what happens when one part is missing? Importance of everyone together.)
  o Acknowledge the different emotions and responses as a result of EU Referendum, (briefly.)

Prayer: ‘A Litany of Reconciliation.’
  o As each child departs, display Mother Teresa prayer:
    I can do things you cannot.
    You can do things I cannot.
    Together we can do great things.
A Christian presence in every community
Prayers for reconciliation after the EU Referendum

A prayer following the result of the EU Referendum

Eternal God, Light of the nations,
in Christ you make all things new:
guide our nation in the coming days through the inspiration of your Spirit,
that understanding may put an end to discord and all bitterness.
Give us grace to rebuild bonds of trust
that together we may work for the dignity and flourishing of all;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Litany of Reconciliation

Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being,
we make our prayer to you, saying,
Hear us, Lord of life.
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Guide our nation in the days and months ahead
to walk the paths of peace and reconciliation.
Hear us, Lord of life.
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Give to our leaders wisdom and sensitivity
to work for unity and the common good.
Hear us, Lord of life.
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Mend broken relationships
and restore to wholeness whatever has been damaged by heated debate.
Hear us, Lord of life.
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful
and lift up all who are dejected.
Hear us, Lord of life.
**Lord, graciously hear us.**

With you, Lord, is the well of life
**and in your light do we see light.**
Hear us, Lord of life and peace:
**and make us whole.**
With you, Lord, is the well of life
**and in your light do we see light.**
Hear us, Lord of life:
**Heal us and make us whole.**

A period of silence follows.

Lord our God,
accept the prayers of your people
and in your mercy look with compassion upon our nation,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
WHAT WOULD JESUS SAY?

Healthy eating
- Where food came from
- Food from around the world
- Fair trade/child labour
- Countries maps
- Human geography
- Family origins
- Immigration

Pledges to improve the World/begin peace and love
- Peace
- Community
- Friendship
- Who is my neighbour?

Where do I come from?

What would be missing without trade and immigration?

What are people worried about?
- Being treated differently
- I am special
- How can we welcome people?
- Welcome poster

Being chosen
- History
- Of immigration
- Invaders/settlers
- Windrush
- Evacuation
- Kinder transport
- Frog & the Stranger
- Blue Penguin

Who is my neighbour?

I am special

Being treated differently

How can we welcome people?
- Welcome poster

RE

HISTORY

MATHS
- Mapwork
- Drama: real and imaginary scenario
- Speech/debate
- Media & clippings
- 2 sides of an argument

LITERACY
- Polish community centre defacing
- Bias
- What are the children’s views?
- Reassurance leaflet
to give to someone who is worried

ART
- Curricular and dance
- Art and music from countries of origin

You Tube:
- Children in need pack - UNICEF
- Aftershock earthquake scene
- Paintings and Portraits (sad women)
- Weeping women
- Cut up and re-arrange faces
WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Create a prayer tree for the school entrance way or a communal area. Send a leaf template home for families to write their prayers of hope and friendship to be displayed on the tree.

- Hold a ‘togetherness evening’ – invite all parents/carers and children and include the local community. Bring and share food and drink to have a shared meal. Decorate the hall with flag bunting.

- Invite a speaker to talk to the whole school community – parents/carers, children and friends. Motivational speakers who unite people. Talk to the local church, local SACRE or local inter-faith group to find people in the community who would be willing to speak on the theme of peace and hope.

- South London Citizens could be a useful source for ideas and speakers.

- Carefully consider theme for the Autumn Term and at times in the future when the Brexit issue is more paramount – peace, hope, friendship.

- Send each child home with a square of fabric. They can decorate it with the help of their families adding their name and a symbol for peace/hope/friendship. All the squares can be sewn together to create a tapestry of friendship and hope. Members of the church congregation or Sunday School could also contribute squares.

- Plan an Act of Worship in church for the whole community.

- School Council could lead a discussion and plan events.

- Have a multi-faith day or week. Opportunity for people from other faiths to come and lead a whole school Collective Worship. From this, the children then learn more about that faith with their class teacher. Children and parents/carers can share their different faiths.

- Create a whole school video to show a core value, e.g. hope/peace/respect. It could be an advert identifying a specific value. Opportunity to interview parents/carers, children and members of the parish. This could then be added to the school website.

- Think ahead for the Autumn Term and at times in the future when the Brexit issue is more paramount, plan a celebration activity that brings families and the community together.
Create an image for peace e.g. using finger prints. Create a whole school image (perhaps a dove) where each child puts their finger print on a canvas – see Pinterest.

Celebration Saturday: Invite children and their families to attend school on a Saturday. The day begins with a shared breakfast and ‘Wake Up, Shake Up’ activity. Collective Worship follows. Sessions led by teachers and support staff based around a theme. Break for coffee and end with a shared lunch.

Roots Day: Children come to school dressed in their traditional dress from their ‘roots’ country. The school dinner for that day is planned to reflect the international theme. Morning activities are planned around the roots theme with Collective Worship. The afternoon activities have ‘The C Factor’ – Culture Factor. Children perform a dance/piece of music/poem etc. that reflects their roots. At the end, parents/carers and families are invited to join an international evening. Parents/carers bring food to share from their ‘roots’ country. Make a record of one of the activities done as a whole school, e.g. a video to go on the school website.

Ensure the school website reflects the values of peace and hope.

Faith groups in schools could launch an initiative together – children and adults working together.

A cluster of schools could hold a joint event – share costs of the speaker. Possibly hold the event in church.

Whole school community picnic on the theme of hope/friendship. Bring and share international food.

Shared breakfast for parents/carers and children with activities and Collective Worship on the theme of faith, hope, love, friendship, being special, etc. Parents/carers can go to classes and join in with the activities.

A musical evening celebrating music from around the world. If the school has a choir, they could learn songs on the theme of hope, peace, and friendship. Sing Up is a great resource, you need to subscribe for the year: www.singup.org

Many cultures/one family special event.

Make sure that all the community knows that school is a safe place if any children and parents/carers have experienced hatred or prejudice of any kind.
LINKS WITH SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Circle Time following EU Referendum Results
Focus: Tolerance and respect for others

SOCIAL – LO: Can we live as one?
SPIRITUAL – Play song ‘We Should Live As One’ as a stimulus. Discuss meaning of LO.
MORAL – Adult to role play feeling uncomfortable about where they live, their religion and where they are from. Choose one focus.
Children to give advice about how to improve the situation and make them feel comfortable.
Use and refer to World Map.
To help children make the link from local to international, refer to the context of the Olympic Games (show video clip from Opening Ceremony, etc.).
CULTURAL – Put up image of the Olympic rings and refer to the values of the Olympic Games – friendship, respect, etc.
Play song ‘One’ by U2 whilst children discuss what each ring could mean.

Activities:
SPIRITUAL - In groups at tables, children to come up with five values for each Olympic ring that reflects tolerance and respect for others.
Younger children: Bring in a photo or item to show where they are from and to sort them into rings that overlap. In hall/playground, children could use word bank resources to label each circle. Children could hold hands in circles to demonstrate tolerance and respect for each other.
KS2 children: In groups, children to come up with five values – one for each ring. Could allocate one value/ring to each group. Children consider what other contexts or events can they think of to unite people?
Extension: Children to make their own logo to show what living as one means to them.

Reflection:
SPIRITUAL - Children to write their own prayer or comment about how they feel people could live as one. Use paper strips and link to make a paper chain and display on prayer table.
Bible reference: Galatians 3:28 or other suitable text.

Resources:
‘As One’ – Hacton Primary School – YouTube;
‘We Should Live As One’ by unknown artist;
Props for adult role play, as appropriate;
Image of World Map;
Olympic Games Opening Ceremony video clip;
Image of Olympic rings;
‘One’ by U2;
Outlines of Olympic rings on A3 paper so KS2 children can write their own values;
Labels for Olympic rings for KS1 – Year 3 class;
Children bring items from home;
Strips of paper for prayer chain and glue.
“I disapprove of what you say. But I will defend to the death your right to say it.”
- Evelyn Beatrice Hall

“Love Thy neighbour as thy self”
- Gospels of Matthew and Mark

Compare and contrast different countries

Responsibility

History of UK voting system

Visit MP

DEMOCRACY

Visit local Council

School Council

How justice works in the UK

Visit to a Crown Court

JUSTICE

What is justice?

Education

“FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES”

LIBERTY

Freedom to hold different faiths, beliefs and views

Visit MP

TOLERANCE

MUTUAL RESPECT

#Moreincommon
- Speeches made around Jo Cox’s (MP) murder.

“Love Thy neighbour as thy self”
- Gospels of Matthew and Mark

#Moreincommon
CHOSEN VALUES: KOINONIA, FRIENDSHIP, PEACE, HOPE, COMPASSION.

Activities can be related to these questions:
Key Questions:
Given our current situation, how can you show compassion towards others?
What is your hope for the future now?
In light of the referendum, what does friendship look like now?
What does peace mean to you in light of the referendum result?
How can our community come together in times of difficulty? /uncertainty?

Display: What is your hope for the future?
Idea: Art Day/Creative Day – respond with music, drama, poetry, writing, photography, etc.
Select a value and focus/reflect for a day.
Idea: Prayer Space – e.g. Sorry, Thankful, Please, Words of Wisdom / understanding.
Write on a card an idea for a prayer, create areas to pray in one room. Gentle music, Candles. (Available for a short time – adds to the value.)
Idea: Paper chain – through a Key Stage, children write a message and pass it on.

Resources:
Biblical quotations and Christian songs:
www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk
www.worshipworkshop.org.uk
The Good Samaritan
The Forgiving Father and The Lost Sheep: – God will always be there for you – have faith in this.

Reflection:
How we treat others is an important part of our worship of God. The Bible calls on us to love our neighbour, to provide for those in need and look after those who might easily be taken advantage of, particularly strangers in a foreign land. Yet the call to love our neighbour provokes the questions: Who is my neighbour? Who is in greatest need?

Koinonia: sharing in common:
Street party;
International Day – equal and strong together;
Write names on a wall/bricks;
Jesus is the cornerstone.

The call to love our neighbour provokes the questions: Who is my neighbour? Who is in greatest need?
# BIBLE VERSES AND STORIES

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<th>Values</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Acts 6:1-6</td>
<td>Choosing of the Deacons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 Peter 2:13</td>
<td>Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority.</td>
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<td>1 Tim 2:1-2</td>
<td>Pray for kings and everyone who is in authority so that we can live a quiet and peaceful life in complete godliness and dignity.</td>
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<td>Justice</td>
<td>1 Kings 3:16-28</td>
<td>Judgement of Solomon.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Micah 6:8</td>
<td>See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern…act justly, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Matthew 5:38-42</td>
<td>Turn the other cheek, (also Tolerance.)</td>
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<td>Acts 6-8</td>
<td>Stone of Stephen.</td>
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<td>Matthew 7:1-5</td>
<td>Do not judge.</td>
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<td>John 8:3-7</td>
<td>Let he who has not sinned cast the first stone.</td>
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<td>Respect</td>
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**Genesis 37 - 48**

He was an alien in a foreign land. Dreams – he believed he would be great – the brothers disagreed.

Forgiveness.

Injustice he suffers when sold into slavery.

Imprisoned due to his beliefs – suffered.

God’s protection.

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS
Think, Pray, Vote: EU Referendum resources for churches

A series of briefing notes produced by the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church with the support of the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office. It covers different topics and includes background information, issues for debate, and questions, and can be used for conversations with groups or for personal reflection.

Love Your Neighbour

As Christians we are called to work, live and pray for a better society. This includes participating in the political processes that shape the lives of our communities, our country and our world. It is our identity as followers of Jesus that will both engage us in the referendum and shape our response. How, then, do we allow our faith to inform our answer to one of the biggest political decisions facing the United Kingdom?

The gospel accounts remind us that Jesus said the greatest commandment is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind”, while the second is to “love your neighbour as yourself.” (Matthew 22:36-40). Jesus reinforces the established Old Testament principle that our relationship with God affects the way we relate to and live with one another. These human relationships are an expression of our relationship with God; the two are intertwined.

But what does this have to do with the European Union, the Schengen Agreement and the single market? The answer is that each of these refers to and directly impacts upon how we relate to each other as individuals, as members of organisations and
communities, and as countries. Whether it concerns questions of sovereignty, the free movement of people, or where laws are made and enforced, these are issues that influence and affect our relationships, and as such, our faith has much to share.

The UK has a longstanding relationship with the other nations of Europe. Our churches have well established links with Christian communities and congregations across the continent; these relationships extend to nations that are currently part of the European Union and those that are not. It is not an issue of whether we need and value these relationships, or even whether we belong in Europe, but whether that sense of belonging is best expressed by being part of the European Union.

**The real referendum question**

The referendum question might therefore be phrased as: “To what extent does the European Union enhance or hinder our ability to love our neighbour and, in doing so, our ability to love God?”

You may like to have that at the back of your mind as you work your way through the more detailed material in this resource, along with these other general questions:

航母 Who, in this context, is our neighbour? Are we talking about neighbours in our local communities, in the UK, in Europe, or in the wider world?

航母 It is an important aim to have good relations with all countries, in Europe and elsewhere. Does our membership of the European Union help us with this, or hinder us?

航母 All political and economic structures are made by humans and therefore flawed. The referendum offers us a choice between political and economic structures where the UK is part of the EU or outside the EU. Which would best enable us to fulfil our Christian duty towards God and our neighbour?

航母 Can the EU, in its current or a reformed state, achieve the ideals we might have for it?
Which neighbours are we talking about: those in our local communities, in the UK, in Europe, or in the wider world?

Does economic union help our relationship with some nations while hindering others?

Does the way the European Union makes laws aid or impede our Christian duty?

The Single Market

Reflection

All economies are located in social relationships. Trade shapes, reflects and is part of our interactions with each other. Trade and markets have a moral element whether that is in the distribution of wealth, the provision of work or the creation of resources. We learn from the Bible that we are not owners but stewards of possessions that ultimately belong to God and that we must look to use these possessions in ways that serve God through serving those in need.

Questions:

What biblical principles help to inform our perspective on trade?

Who is helped and who is harmed by the current single market arrangements?

What links need to be made between trade and the protection of God’s creation?

In what ways does the EU’s single market provide opportunities for serving God and serving others, and how does it limit this ability?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of trade. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

- The parable of the talents – Matthew 25:14-30
- Giving alms – Luke 12:33
Sovereignty and Subsidiarity

Reflection

All Christian theological thinking about sovereignty begins with the sovereignty of God. If we accept that God’s power is universal then our starting concept of sovereignty is one that transcends national borders. All other sovereignties exist under, and are subject to, divine sovereignty. But when should nations or individuals surrender a degree of self-determination in order to cooperate? And when should they preserve their individuality in order to meet their own needs more acutely? Certain passages within the Bible suggest that God wants us to live together in unity but our individual diversity is also valued, as we read in 1 Corinthians 12:19, “If all were a single member, where would the body be?” As we reflect on the EU referendum it might be helpful to explore some of the following questions.

Questions

黝 What do you think sovereignty means? What about subsidiarity? How do Christian understandings of these concepts affect how we see the EU?
黝 What are the ways in which working with others enables us to serve God and those around us? When can it be restrictive?
黝 How does the EU affect UK sovereignty? How does it affect our ability to meet our own needs and the needs of those around us?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of sovereignty and subsidiarity. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

黝 “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1
黝 “When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples.” Deuteronomy 32:8
黝 One body with many members – 1Corinthians 12:12-20
黝 Regard for others – Philippians 2:1-5
The Free Movement of People

Reflection

The Bible contains stories involving migration and the movement of people – whether it be the Israelites moving to escape famine, flee persecution or to follow God’s calling to the Promised Land; or the disciples and apostles of the early Church spreading the good news. Within these migration stories movement, culture and identity are explored as a fruitful ground for blessings (to those settling and those resident), as well as threats, both physical and cultural. As we reflect on the EU referendum it might be helpful to explore some of the questions.

Questions

🔍 How has your local area been affected by EU immigration? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this to the local community, and to the country?
🔍 What do biblical stories tell us about nations, migration and the place of the stranger?
🔍 How does the free movement of people in the EU affect our identities? How does this relate to our identity in Christ?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of the movement of people. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

💡 Joseph and Pharaoh – Genesis 47:1-12
💡 “You and the alien shall be alike before the Lord...” – Numbers 15:15
💡 “He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal...” – Luke 9:1-6
💡 “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” – Galatians 3:28
Work and Benefits

Reflection

How we treat others is an important part of our worship of God. The Bible calls on us to love our neighbour, to provide for those in need and look after those who might easily be taken advantage of, particularly strangers in a foreign land. Yet the call to love our neighbour provokes the question: who is my neighbour? Who is in greatest need?

Questions

 pled How do the EU entitlements around work and benefits fit with the Bible’s picture of caring for those who need it?
 pled As in the case of child benefit, what responsibility do we have for others, and how does that apply to those outside our national borders?
 pled Is there a tension between the call to care for others and the need to care for ourselves? How do the two relate to one another in our lives and in Scripture?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issues of work and benefits. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

 pled “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field…” – Leviticus 23:22
 pled “Do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow…” – Jeremiah 7:6-7
 pled Warning against idleness – 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

The call to love our neighbour provokes the question: who is my neighbour? Who is in greatest need?
Peace and International Relations

Reflection

As Christians we are called to follow the Prince of Peace, and peace is often used to signify right relationship or God’s blessing. Yet, the Christian concept of peace is much more than the absence of violence. As we see in Matthew 10, we are not called to make peace for its own sake, but to enable peace to grow out of relationships that allow the full flourishing of all. As we reflect on the EU referendum it might be helpful to explore some of the following questions.

Questions

♀ What are the characteristics of the peace that God desires for us?
♀ How are these characteristics present or restricted through the EU’s structure, its projects and its work?
♀ What role do we have as Christians for building peace within Europe and does that relate to membership of the EU?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of peace. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

♀ “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation…” – Micah 4:3
♀ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” – Matthew 5:9
♀ The cost of following Jesus –Matthew 10:34-39
♀ Pursuing the kingdom of God – Romans 14:17-19

Care for the Environment

Reflection

Christian concern for the environment arises out of an understanding that we have a duty of stewardship and care for creation that is ultimately God’s. As Hope in God’s Future, produced by the Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Churches, observes “God is present and active in sustaining creation from moment to moment. We are not, therefore,
stewards acting in place of an absent landlord, but servants called to play our part in response to God’s care for creation.”

Questions

✍ In what ways does concern for the environment fit into our worship of God and service of others?
✍ As we look to the future, how do we think the EU will help or hinder our care of God’s creation?

While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of environment. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

✍ “God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.” – Genesis 1:28-31
✍ “The earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it…” – Psalm 24:1-6
✍ “The earth is full of your creatures.” – Psalm 104:24-25

Agriculture and Food

Reflection

Food is more than just fuel, it is a gift from God. Yet many of us do not think about where it comes from, or how it is produced. Many of the parables within the Bible use farming metaphors to help us understand how we relate to God and to each other, and the production and sharing of food shapes our cultures and affects our relationships. As we till the land we must care for God’s creation and provide for those in need. As we reflect on the EU referendum it might be helpful to explore some of the following questions.

Questions

✍ What does the way we produce and share food say about our relationship with God and each other?
✍ Who would be helped by changes to the way that farming and fishing is subsidised, and who would be hindered?
While we recognise that Bible passages are written in a particular context and often with a particular purpose, you may find some of the following readings helpful as you reflect on the issue of food. You may also find it helpful to consider other passages from Scripture or different texts in your reflection.

➤ “When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow…” – Deuteronomy 24:19-22
➤ God’s provision – Psalm 65:9-13
➤ Life is more than food – Luke 12:22-24

Scripture quotations are from:

Member Countries of the EU

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
United Kingdom

European countries not in the EU
- Switzerland
- Norway
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Serbia (applied to join EU)
- Kosovo
- Albania (applied to join EU)
- Macedonia (applied to join EU)
- Ukraine
- Moldova
- Iceland
- Belarus
- Russia
- Turkey (applied to join EU)
- Montenegro
OTHER RESOURCES

Paddington Bear movie – clip of the aftermath of the earthquake and Paddington ‘immigrating’ to the UK.

Book: Blue Penguin by Petr Horacek

UNICEF – Children in Need: www.unicef.org.uk

Media clips and news relating to events since the referendum

YouTube: www.youtube.com