

Faith

CHARITIES FORUM

18.09.2024

15 Hatfields, London

**Exploring our potential
as agents of unity**

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- The power of community to affect change
- Fundraising trends and innovation
- Leading faith-based organisations through troubled times
- Bridging difference with courage and compassion
- The path ahead for faith charities and government

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Organised by 



Jenni O'Donovan
Events director,
Civil Society Media



CHARITIES FORUM

Exploring our potential as agents of unity

It's my great pleasure to announce the line-up for Civil Society Media's fourth annual Faith Charities Forum. This is a bespoke conference specifically designed for senior leaders and decision-makers working in faith-based organisations. It is intended to create an opportunity to discuss the role that faith plays in helping many charities achieve their objectives, and to address some of the key challenges facing this unique group of organisations. This year's programme has a strong focus on the role of faith groups in social cohesion, and our collective power to create unity in an increasingly diverse and often polarised society. We hope you will join us for what promises to be a thought-provoking and inspiring day.

08:30	Registration, coffee & networking	
09:10	Chair's welcome: Paul Parker , recording clerk, Quakers in Britain	
09:20	Panel – Steering faith organisations through turbulent waters In today's world, faith-based organisations face unprecedented challenges as they operate in an environment of increasing societal polarisation and escalating religious tensions, both locally and globally. This session will delve into some of the complexities facing our panel, and examine leadership strategies for building organisational resilience and fostering unity within diverse teams. How can a foundation of faith shape our approach to conflict and become a tool for building social cohesion? Panellists – Christine Allen , executive director, CAFOD, Maurice Helfgott , chair of trustees, World Jewish Relief, Zara Mohammed , secretary general, Muslim Council of Britain and Patrick Watt , chief executive, Christian Aid	
10:10	Regulatory update – Charity Commission Colette Bennett , charities engagement manager, the Charity Commission	
10:40	Networking & refreshment break	
11:10	Faith investors and the ESG backlash Faith investors were among the earliest ESG investors, recognising that profits had to be consistent with their beliefs, and aware of the negative impacts that activities could have on humanity and the environment. For many years, an ever-growing number of investors, of all faiths and none, joined us on this journey – but now a backlash has started. With this growing backlash against ESG investing, what should faith investors do? Christophe Borysiewicz , investment director, Rathbones	
11:50	Transit time	
	Stream A: Chair – Paul Parker , recording clerk, Quakers in Britain	Stream B: Chair – Jenni O'Donovan , events director, Civil Society Media
11:55	1A. Transforming digital giving in the Church of England With card having overtaken cash as the preferred form of payment and the explosion of online giving because of the pandemic, the Church of England has undertaken a five-year giving strategy to embed digital giving in 50% of parishes. Working in partnership with regional colleagues, the National Giving Team gave over 2,000 contactless devices away at face-to-face training events throughout the country: working in a range of contexts from the smallest rural countryside church to the biggest national Cathedrals, undertaking a major upskilling in the digital literacy of church volunteers. In 2023 alone, churches across the country received digital donations and payments of almost £14 million. Join this session to hear how this cultural change project unlocked new partnerships, generated new income for missional opportunities and strengthened its legacy proposition. Grace Emmett , national digital giving manager and Eleanor Stead , head of giving, Church of England	1B. Safeguarding – exploring the intersection of faith and abuse Cases of domestic abuse are at an all-time high. Many survivors with a faith feel that some specialist services and society, in general, are unable to understand their experiences of abuse, and their barriers to accessing support due to their religious identity, their faith community and any spiritual abuse that they may experience at the hands of their perpetrator. At the same time, faith and spirituality can play a crucial role in healing. The Faith and VAWG Coalition exists to build bridges between members of faith communities and domestic abuse specialists. Join this session to deepen your understanding of the intersection between faith and abuse, as well as practical advice for spotting the warning signs through to offering the appropriate support. Faith and Violence Against Women and Girls Coalition

12:35	Lunch	
13:35	2A. Muslim Civil Society: Tradition, Transformation, and Tomorrow This session will examine generational and social shifts impacting UK Muslim civil society, highlighting evolving perspectives and priorities. It will consider elements such as; the changing role of faith-based anchor organisations in communities, the value of Zakat in tackling poverty and strengthening communities, the diversification from international humanitarian aid to addressing pressing local issues within the UK itself, and real life examples of faith-based social impact. Importantly, it will prompt reflections on how such shifts are mirrored across various faith communities, offering valuable lessons for different faith-based organisations navigating similar transitions. Chair – Jehangir Malik , faith & civil society advisor and director, British Muslim Civil Society Report Panellists – Dr Abdul Haqq Baker , chief executive, Green Lane Mosque Community Centre, Tuffail Hussain , director, Islamic Relief UK and Zamzam Ibrahim , climate activist	2B. Faith and philanthropy: Understanding and unlocking Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) are becoming an increasingly popular, tax-efficient and admin free structure for charitable giving. This session aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of DAFs as a philanthropic tool and how and why faith-based organisations might benefit from them. Join us if you are interested in new ways to engage donors and stewarding long-term mutually beneficial relationships. Annika Greco Thompson , relationship manager (philanthropy services) and Megan Wilcock , relationship manager (next gen), Stewardship
14:15	Transit time	
14:20	Tensions and transformations: The road ahead for faith charities and government With the recent election of a new Labour government, there is a renewed hope for closer collaboration with the charity sector. This marks a significant shift from recent years, where the relationship between faith charities and government has encountered strains exemplified by high-profile incidents like the withdrawal of funding from the Inter Faith Network. As we stand at this pivotal moment, faith communities and organisations are looking for clarity and vision from the new government. The vital role of faith as a valuable societal resource, particularly in supporting marginalized and impoverished communities, advocating for social justice and fostering unity, underscores the urgency for renewed cooperation and a shared vision between faith-based initiatives and government entities. Hassan Joudi , former trustee, Interfaith Network, Rachel Lampard , director of social action and justice, Methodist Church and Gareth McNab , director of external affairs, Christians Against Poverty	
15:10	Networking break	
15:30	Closing keynote: Navigating Israel and Palestine with our communities in the UK For this important closing keynote discussion, we welcome three key representatives from FODIP, a faith-based dialogue organisation whose main charitable objective is to improve relations between faith communities in the UK, to help us broach the difficult and emotive topic of Israel/Palestine. We are operating in the context of increasing polarisation, with incidents of Islamophobia and Antisemitism on the rise which demand that we prioritise cohesion and unity more than ever before, both within our own organisations and in a wider context. We invite our speakers to share their expertise in dialogue, to enable positive conversations on this difficult topic, even when those engaged have radically different perspectives. Sadia Akram , programme director, Dr Jane Clements , founder and co-chair and Rabbi Warren Elf , co-chair and treasurer, FODIP (Forum of Discussion for Israel/Palestine)	
16:10	Chairs' closing remarks – Paul Parker , recording clerk, Quakers in Britain	
16:20	Networking reception	

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