

One year to go to prepare for the Olympic Truce!

Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster Justice and Peace Commissions are preparing activities for '100 Days of Peace' around the Olympic and Paralympic Games next year.



In particular, they are highlighting two initiatives for peace, one involving churches and schools, and one involving the UK government and the UN.

8 June 2011 marks one year before the beginning of '100 Days of Peace', a faith-based promotion of a culture of peace around next year's Olympic and Paralympic Games. Meanwhile the UK government has 3 months to prepare a resolution for the UN as to how it will promote the spirit of the Olympic Truce as part of the Games. So, there is a year to prepare for '100 Days of Peace' and three months for the UK's 'Peace Resolution'!

Supporting 'The Truce' through 100 Days of Peace

Brentwood, Southwark and Westminster Justice and Peace Commissions have been working with Pax Christi, More Than Gold, CAFOD and the Jimmy Mizen Foundation on a season of peace activities for schools and parishes, entitled, 'a 100 Hundred Days of Peace' - to celebrate the Olympics and Paralympics in 2012.

On 8 June 2012 many churches and schools across London and beyond will begin to mark the season with peace-based events around the Games, in the spirit of the original Olympic Truce.

The resolution

The UK government is required to formulate a resolution to put to the UN in September this year, linked to the tradition of the Olympic Sacred Truce. The ancient Greek Olympics were preceded by a Sacred Truce, which enabled competitors to reach Olympia safely, as they passed through the small warring city-states of the Greek peninsula. Peace was thus an ancient ideal of the Olympics, and also of the Games revived in 1896 by Pierre de Coubertin.

The modern Truce was revived through a UN resolution in 1993, requiring countries hosting the Olympics to present a resolution in the year leading to their Games, to demonstrate how they would honour the Truce by specific peace-building measures.

Justice and Peace supports the endeavours of Lord Michael Bates who has often raised this issue in

Parliament, and who is currently walking from Olympia to London to publicise UK obligations in this regard. His website invites everyone to make suggestions for the UK's peace measures: www.walkfortrue.org Please send your suggestions to this website. The Justice and Peace Commission suggests that measures should include building a Culture of Peace.

A Culture of Peace

A 'Culture of Peace' consists in the strong belief that peace can be achieved and seen as the norm, if we work for it, through cultural activities, education, worship or community-building. Sport's significant role has been recognised by United Nations, through their Sport and Development Forum. We strongly urge the Government and LOCOG in their UN resolution to commit the UK to celebrating a Culture of Peace as the main theme of the 2012 Games, and to make the Olympic Truce a modern reality.

The Commissions hope that the 100 Days of Peace initiative, to be launched later this year, will contribute to establishing a Culture of Peace in our city by promoting a real celebration of international understanding as well as peace on our streets. The website, www.peacelegacy.org.uk already has ideas and resources for building a Culture of Peace in schools, neighbourhoods and communities.