

## Tony Njoroge Considers Islam

Muslims from North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia were present in London in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, working as translators and diplomats. Today, Islam is the second largest religious group in the UK. I wonder how much we know about this ancient faith.

As part of his Christian Theology course, **Tony Njoroge** was tasked to conduct an interview with a practicing member of a religious tradition different to mine. He chose to interview a Muslim – Mr Jaffer Olum. He discovered, among many other things, the following:

**GOD:** To be a Muslim is first and foremost to believe that Allah is the only true God. Mohammad is Allah’s messenger as well as the last prophet who came down to earth.

**ISLAM AND JUDAISM:** Allah and the God of Abraham, the one worshiped by Christians are in their view one and the same god. Muslims respect the prophets of Judaism – like Elijah and King David – and they see the books of the Law and the Old Testament as divinely inspired.

However, Muslims see the Quran as their central authority. It is believed to be the direct word of God.

**CONVERSION:** All one needs to do to convert to Islam is to voluntarily recite an oral declaration of faith known as ‘*Shahada*’ declaring total submission to Allah and commitment to follow the Islamic way of life. *Shahada* is basically a declaration testifying that there is no other god but Allah and that Mohammad is his only Prophet.

**PRAYER:** Prayer in Islam is an obligation of faith to be carried out five times daily by every adult. Known as *salat* it is a key obligation of the Islamic faith and serves to unite Muslims all over the world. *Salat* consists of five distinct prayers dictated by the position of the sun being *Fajir* at sunrise, *Dhuhr* at noon, *Asr* in late afternoon, *Maghrib* at sunset and *Isha* before retiring to bed.

**FASTING:** Fasting is observed during the holy month of Ramadan where the faithful aim to detach themselves from material pleasures in favour of being close to God.

**OTHER RELIGIONS:** Love and tolerance of other faiths were considered an essential aspect of Islam.

### Further Thoughts from Raymond



**How should we think about Islam?** To pray faithfully five times a day is a challenging spiritual regime, and we should certainly respect those who put God first in their schedule to such an extent.



**How can Muslims claim to respect other faiths when so much violence is carried out in the name of Islam?** There is a radical Islam which has shed blood all over the world. But it does not speak for the whole Islamic faith. As Christians, we would not want to be associated with the terrible acts carried out by the Spanish Inquisition; nor was every self-declared “Protestant” or “Catholic” who carried a gun during the Ulster troubles a representative of the church Christ came to found.

**Should we agree that Allah and the God of Christianity are the same?** The Bible defines God as “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” That is precisely the thing that Islam denies.

**What is one of the biggest difference between Islam and Christianity?** The prayer Jesus taught his disciples invites us to call God, our *Father*. This is not one of the 99 names for God in Islam. Only in Jesus do we find a Father.



## An Experiment with the Balcony

Our PCC agreed to close the balcony on two Sundays in the summer to see what that felt like. Numbers are inevitably smaller and to divide the congregation in two on those days does not make a lot of sense. We hope that you will all enjoy coming together for worship today and on August 26th. . It should help the singing—and it is also cooler downstairs. We appreciate that those who like to worship in the balcony are the people making the sacrifice here, and we thank you for your willingness to do that.



## Andrew’s Funeral Service

In order to enable family to come over from Canada, Andrew’s funeral service will not take place for some time yet. We expect it to be on the morning of Tuesday September 4th. The family will have a ceremony of interment at the crematorium and then we will return to church for a service commemorating Andrew’s life. That will take place here in church at 11.30am

Jean and the family have appreciated all the cards and expressions of support which have been sent during the weeks of Andrew’s illness and since his passing.

**Prayers:** We continue to remember **Jean, Simon, Rebecca and Rachel** as they live with the sadness of Andrew's passing. **Pam Howlett** has been going through a lot of illness recently and is now on her second stay in hospital. She is improving but remains very weak. Let's not forget **Peter** who is spending a lot of time visiting her. **Brian Sweetman** was taken to hospital suddenly last Friday morning. We pray for the family of our former churchwarden **Peter Eastwood** and those who mourn the bitter loss of Peter's grandson Isaac, who recently took his own life. We remember his parents and siblings as they come to terms with this most tragic event. Pray for **all those in our fellowship who are struggling with sorrows** of various kinds. May they know the power that Christ possesses to bring healing where it is needed, strength where it is lacking and hope where we feel too weak to face the future.

Wed 1st	1.00-3.00	Craft Club
Fri 3rd	10.30am-1.30pm	Rock Café

Please pray for our church family	
<b>Mon 30th</b>	Charles & Harriet Oduro-Owusu
<b>Tue 31st</b>	Sam & Patience Opoka & family
<b>Wed 1st</b>	Shelley Osbourne
<b>Thurs 2nd</b>	John & Liz Pearce & Saffron
<b>Fri 3rd</b>	Margaret Poulton
<b>Sat 4th</b>	Julian & Win Priddle
<b>Sun 5th</b>	Terry & Joan Rawlings

**Note from Catherine:**  
 I'll be on holiday from the parish office for the first 2 weeks of August and will return to work on Thursday 16th August. Raymond is also away at the same time. From 16th August my new working hours will be 8.30am-3pm Thursdays & Fridays. Thanks.

Services Next Week			
<b>5th Aug</b>	9am	Holy Communion	Simon Robertson Simon Robertson
	11am	Morning Praise	

Parish Office Email: [parishoffice@stjohnshaydonwick.org.uk](mailto:parishoffice@stjohnshaydonwick.org.uk) or Telephone 726000. All items for the bulletin to the office in writing by first thing on Wednesday. Thank you.



# Sunday July 29

## Trinity 10



***"Eagle"***

Time	Service	Preacher	Readings
9.00am	Holy Communion	Raymond Adams	Deut 32: 10-12 & Ex 19:4 Mark 8: 22-30
11.00am	All Age Service	Raymond Adams	Deut 32: 10-12 & Ex 19:4