

Religious freedom issues - two perspectives

Monday 16th November 2015: 6:00 for 6.30 pm

St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace, 78 Bishopsgate, London, EC2N 4AG

Come to hear **Baroness Caroline Cox** and **Benedict Rogers** address some of the key issues of our times: What does 'religious freedom' mean in a world rife with conflict and war? What impact has ISIS had on religious freedom issues around the world? How do we make a stand for religious freedom issues today and what are the major obstacles? How will the future look and what are some examples of successful religious freedom initiatives on the ground? Sarah Snyder of the Cambridge Inter-Faith programme will chair the event and we anticipate an informed discussion and lively debate.



Baroness Cox was created a Life Peer in 1982 and was a deputy speaker of the House of Lords from 1985 to 2005. She was Founder Chancellor of Bournemouth University from 2006-2013 and is an Hon. Vice President of the Royal College of Nursing. She was a founder Trustee of MERLIN [Medical Emergency Relief International] and is Chief Executive of HART [Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust]. Caroline Cox has been honoured with numerous awards for her humanitarian and faith activities, including the Wilberforce Award, the International Mother Teresa Award from the All India Christian Council, and high honours from Armenia and Poland. She has been awarded Honorary Fellowships or Doctorates by universities in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Russian Federation and Armenia. Her humanitarian work takes her to conflict and post-conflict zones, including the Armenian enclave of Nagorno Karabakh, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda, the Karen, Karenni, Shan and Chin peoples of Burma. Previously, she visited communities suffering from conflict in Indonesia, helping to establish the International Islamic Christian Organisation for Reconciliation and Reconstruction (IICORR) with late former President Abdurrahman Wahid. She has visited North Korea to promote Parliamentary initiatives and medical programmes.

Benedict Rogers is the East Asia Team Leader at Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), where he specialises in research and advocacy on freedom of religion and wider human rights in Burma, Indonesia and North Korea and oversees work on China, Vietnam and Laos. He is the author of three books, including *Burma: A Nation at the Crossroads* (2012, Random House), co-author of two books, including *The Very Stones Cry Out: The Persecuted Church – Pain, Passion, Praise* (2011, Continuum – with Baroness Cox) and *On the Side of the Angels: Justice, Human Rights and Kingdom Mission* (2007, Authentic – with Joseph D'souza), and author of several major reports for CSW. His forthcoming book, *From Burma to Rome: A Journey into the Catholic Church*, will be published by Gracewing in November 2015. Ben travels widely in the region, including making over 50 visits to Burma and its borderlands and several visits to Indonesia. In 2010, he travelled to North Korea with Lord Alton of Liverpool and Baroness Cox of Queensbury, members of the House of Lords, and in 2011 he co-founded the International Coalition to Stop Crimes against Humanity in North Korea (ICNK). Ben has also lived in and travelled to East Timor and



China, and previously worked on Pakistan and Sri Lanka. From 1997-2002 he lived in Hong Kong, working as a journalist, and in 2003-2004 he was based in Washington, DC, establishing CSW's presence there. Ben regularly briefs senior Government Ministers and officials in the UK, the European Union, United Nations, US on human rights and freedom of religion or belief in Asia, and has testified in hearings at the European Parliament, the House of Commons, the Japanese Diet and the US Congress. He has also organised several fact-finding visits to Burma's borders for British and European Parliamentarians.



Sarah Snyder was an anthropologist and documentary producer for BBC Television before retraining as a theologian specialising in Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations. She has lived and worked with nomadic people groups in the Sahara desert and East African rift valley, and in South Africa, Bangladesh, Peru and Bolivia. She has worked with the Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme since then, co-ordinating the programme of Scriptural Reasoning and travelling widely to bring together groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims. She has a passion for faith-based reconciliation, and is currently directing a new initiative to establish an international centre of reconciliation at Rose Castle in the UK. She is married with four children.

Join us for a stimulating evening of discussion and reflection on some of these pivotal questions and more¹.

Please register at: <https://www.stethelburgas.org/civicism/event/info?id=793&reset=1>

Ticket prices: Standard £15, Concession (students) £9.

¹ This is a joint event organised by the St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace and the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants' (WCoMC) Faith Group.