

8th September 2026

Building just and lasting peace

Speaker highlights

Jane Kinninmont: Chief Executive Officer at the United Nations Association - UK



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“We need people to stand up for peace. It starts by saying that the current direction of travel is unacceptable, and it moves on to finding ways to build something new and stronger, to build communities of resilience, action, and hope at all levels to address the epidemic of people feeling powerless and hopeless and lonely. And I think faith communities and faith leaders have a powerful voice and can be a vitally important part of this.”

Philip Powell: Tearfund theologian



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“Christian internationalism created the conditions and catalysed the vision that gave birth to the international organisation for peace that we now call the United Nations. That is why John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State, said, ‘Without the churches, the United Nations would not have been formed’. As Christ-followers, we believe that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. We believe his victory on the cross over against all violence and injustice through laying down his own life for the sake of others, including his enemies, will ultimately determine the telos of the unfolding drama of world history. And you and I have a part to play in that.”

Professor John Heathershaw: University of Exeter.



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“When I look at the world, I don’t see a return to geopolitics and don’t fear the kind of unravelling we saw in the 1930s. Rather, I see an unveiling of evil, a breakdown of sovereign power of the state, and a breaking in of the kingdom into the world. I see the character of political order being revealed. It is a world ruled by elites not by the rule of law. But it is also a world where this rule is shown to be morally corrupt and often ineffective by those seeking justice from the bottom up.”

Clark Buys: Tearfund theologian



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"We need a type of restorative justice that doesn't just want us to go backwards, but rather acknowledges that some wounds in bodies, communities, and nations, some wounds are scars that will not go away. We need a type of restorative justice that imagines a future together, perhaps best described as healing justice. A path that refuses to ignore harm, but also refuses to let harm have the last word."

Safa Hijazeen: Tearfund regional director for Eurasia and North Africa



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"Morality is often the luxury offered only to the secure. When survival is on the line, ethics are the first casualty. Geopolitics deals with abstractions, spheres of influence, buffer zones, grand strategies, and deterrence, but the price of these abstractions is always paid in flesh and in blood. The state survives as a concept, yet individuals perish in reality. I'm afraid this is the thinking of the world. If we are to become true to our identity in Christ, we must challenge our assumptions about the peace, justice, and the solutions offered by the state systems. Our role must become a tangible expression of our faith in everything that Jesus said and did. To claim Jesus as our brother is to accept the sacred burden of becoming hands and feet of his peace and security, actively dismantling structures of injustice that choke our neighbours."

John Cooper: Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation



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"We're not there to bless and agree with any government policy, because the vision that we follow and the discipleship we're called into is more timeless. If we link it to a moment or a security concern, we fail ourselves, we fail our theology. As a faith movement, we fail if we do not sow the seeds of prophetic imagination in every one of our friends, congregations, and neighbours to say, 'War is not the answer. It is not the endpoint. We are called to build a movement of peace'. We all find our place in it in different shapes, forms, and ways. But we need to do that because no one else is."