

ST GEORGE 4 ALL!

St George's Day Statement from Leading Faith Groups

Embargo: NONE

Twitter: #stgeorge4all



Time to reclaim St George's Day for all English, say leading faith figures

St George should be a figure of national unity and pride. That's why we – a coalition of English faith groups and campaigners – are 'reclaiming' England's patron saint and demanding he becomes representative of **all** English peoples.

We demand him back from those who promote racism and extremism, and from those who say that St George can only represent a single ethnic group.

We want to promote a new, relaxed and confident, English national identity. A place where a hijab is as welcome as bangers and mash, and no-one is attacked for their race, religion (or lack thereof) or any other belief.

That is why this St George's Day we are reclaiming St George.

As patron saint for England, St George is there for everyone living in England. Too often he has been hijacked and used as a symbol of triumphalism and division by those on the extreme Right. St George needs to take his rightful place as a national symbol of inclusivity rather than a symbol of hatred.

Although the Crusaders used the Cross of St George, St George actually lived before the birth of Islam and should not be associated with any hatred of

Muslims. He is respected by many people in the Middle East because of his origins there.

Therefore on St George's Day, we call upon all people of goodwill to join us in:

- **standing up against the hijacking of a national hero by those who promote Islamophobia, antisemitism and other forms of discrimination**
- **opposing the modern 'dragons' of hatred and intolerance**
- **saying: 'As the diverse people of England, we are comfortable with difference, and each other. St George's Day is a time for highlighting harmony and peaceful national pride.'**

Signatories:

Al-Khoei Foundation www.al-khoei.org
Awareness Foundation www.awareness-foundation.com
Baptist Union of Great Britain www.baptist.org.uk
Christian Muslim Forum www.christianmuslimforum.org
City Sikhs Network www.citysikhs.org.uk
Faith Matters www.faith-matters.org
Global Village (Lancashire)
HOPE not hate www.hopenothate.org.uk
Islamic Society of Britain www.isb.org.uk
Joseph Interfaith Foundation www.josephinterfaithfoundation.org
London Baptist Association www.londonbaptist.org.uk
London Boroughs Faith Network <http://lbfm.wordpress.com>
London Inter Faith Centre <http://londoninterfaith.org.uk/>
Majlis-e-Ulama Europe <http://majliseulama.org>
Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board www.minab.org.uk
Muslim Council of Britain www.mcb.org.uk
Preston Faith Forum www.prestonfaithforum.org.uk
Radical Middle Way www.radicalmiddleway.org
Religions for Peace UK www.religionsforpeace.org.uk
St Philip's Centre www.stphilipscentre.co.uk
Three Faiths Forum www.3ff.org.uk
Woman's Voice www.womansvoice.info

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NOTES FOR EDITORS – Twitter feed: #stgeorge4all

MEDIA RELEASE

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