

Anti-Racism Charter

Case study: Living the ARC Charter



Living the Anti Racism Charter at All Saints Upper Norwood

At All Saints with St Margaret, Upper Norwood, the Anti Racism Charter is not a distant ideal – it's the heartbeat of their Mission Action Plan (MAP). Under Father Antonio and the PCC's leadership, all parish activity is grounded in the Charter's principles:

"In our parish of All Saints with St Margaret, Upper Norwood, we believe the Gospel calls us not only to worship, but to respond boldly to the needs of our neighbours. Reflecting our core values of justice, hospitality, inclusion and collaboration we have now launched new racial justice and social action initiatives."

Maureen Crooks, PCC Secretary

ESOL as empowerment: from isolation to belonging

The ARC challenges churches to create spaces of welcome, belonging and justice. At All Saints, this commitment is visible in initiatives that break down barriers and affirm people's dignity. One example is their English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course, *Speaking Love: English for Life and Dignity*. This gives those who often feel voiceless the confidence to participate fully in community life.

Twice weekly, the Church offers free basic English classes, led by supportive volunteers on practical themes such as health, shopping and form-filling.

The classes have become a doorway into trust and relationship, offering not just language support, but food, friendship and a sense of belonging to people facing huge uncertainty and challenges in their daily lives.

"I was in a very low and dark place, and I was close to becoming homeless with my children. They gave me the support and confidence I needed to learn more of the language. I met so many kind and caring people."

Claudia, Nicaragua



Fr Antonio leading a service of baptism and admission to holy communion, May 2025.

Hospitality in action

Food and celebrating global cultures are undeniably part of the All Saint's 'love language'.

Even before the ESOL course, the Church had been hosting a regular lunch group that enables church kitchen facilities to be shared securely with members of the community. This supports refugees and asylum seekers who lack access to kitchens within the confines of their accommodation, enabling them to prepare food from their own cultures and preserving identity and dignity within community spaces.

"Having a one-to-one helper was very important for me. She stay with me, explain again, and I feel not shy to speak. Also I could help in kitchen, cooking food with others, and it make me feel good helping."

Jamila, Iran

Combined with the English classes, this is having a life-changing impact:

"This class felt like a safe home in the week. We learnt English and shared a meal I really liked. Not always I like the meals they give us at my accommodation, because sometimes too dry or cold, but here it was nice and warm. I left each time feeling better, and with friends."

Roya, Afghanistan

Language, participation and representation

The Church is seeing an increase in Spanish speaking congregation members, as well as in asylum-seekers and other new families moving into the local area. A Spanish-speaking discipleship group has been established and is already giving new energy and depth to Sunday worship. A regular discipleship programme in Spanish for children and young people aged 3–16 now runs every Sunday. This includes specific preparation for confirmation and admission to holy communion, enabling people to participate fully in the life of the Church.

Accountability and impact



"As we reflected on the theological underpinnings of the Anti Racism Charter, a lot of the topics cut to the living heart of the Gospel — speaking about who

we are as a people of God, as a church; how we listen to one another, and how we embody and understand one another, because we are one body. Studying the ARC really expanded our understanding of our own faith, beyond what racism is, and its impact on our actions and mission."

Father Antonio, Incumbent at All Saints Upper Norwood



A volunteer, Darren Ellsum, leading the ESOL course, Summer 2025.

All Saints' commitment and accountability to racial justice have been made concrete in their MAP for the next five years until 2030. Fittingly, this plan – a real labour of love – has been published in two versions: English and Spanish, ensuring accessibility and inclusion from the outset. "These are not isolated projects", Fr Antonio explains. "They are expressions of our commitment to build a community that reflects Christ's love and justice. The ARC helps us hold ourselves accountable to that vision."



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