

## **KHACHKAR PEACE & RECONCILIATION PROJECT (KPRP)**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to spread the message of togetherness, love, hope and humanity, using the Khachkar (Cross Stone) as a universal symbol of reconciliation.

The term reconciliation was first formally archived in the 14th century. Regardless of wars and devastation, people have throughout time sought peaceful unity in their lives. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, stated in a speech that 'Reconciliation is about seeking to transform relationships that have become damaged or destructive into relationships of trust that bring new life' and It is this notion of transformation which we, The Khachkar Peace and Reconciliation Project, endorse.

In these trying times, there is an increasing danger of being unable or unwilling to focus on our similarities instead of our differences. As humans we all want to live our lives in love and not fear and to achieve this the principles of tolerance, humility and forgiveness must flourish. It sometimes seems impossible to find light in the darkest hours but that is even more reason, as Archbishop Justin says, to recognise 'a call to see others in their full humanity, to persist in seeking their good'.

Reconciliation can use many approaches. Art is a universal language and though it can be subject to interpretation, it requires no translation. Art's power is unmistakable and can be used as a visual tool to spread a message of hope. In the case of Canterbury Cathedral, the Khachkar Peace and Reconciliation Project aims to spread its message through the use of a particular form of sculpture, the Armenian Cross Stone (the Khachkar), which has symbolised hope and the overcoming of diversity for over a thousand years.

**We strive to create art that promotes peace, love, hope and reconciliation.**

At the base of the Khachkar, which was placed on the grounds of Canterbury Cathedral in 2019, there is an inscription, in Armenian, which says 'And I go forward towards the source of the light'. This message, emblazoned into the stone, reminds us that though light may be dampened, it can never be captured or extinguished and this is the promise that our project will carry forward.