



August 2026

LINK-up

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict

Message from the Chair

It was a delight to see so many people at the ecumenical open-air service at the Bandstand on Sunday 9 August. We always wonder what the turnout will be and how the weather will affect it. This year the question was how many souls would be willing to come out on a hot Sunday morning and huddle under the trees to keep out of the direct sun – but there were about 200 in the end, rather more than came in 2025. A couple of families went along the river in canoes and the odd visitor drifted by, as usual. And of course the ground looked, generally, very bare and dry.

My role this year was to lead the intercessions, and I mentioned the extreme weather we are currently experiencing, the strain already appearing from prolonged hot and dry conditions. The old Anglican Book of Common Prayer includes a variety of petitions 'In the time of war and tumults', 'In the time of any common Plague or Sickness', and, first of all, simply 'For rain'. We know rather more now about the complexity of the global weather system than we did in the 17th century, and by and large we expect God to work with the grain of nature rather than reach into it and intervene from outside; we're less inclined to see adverse natural events as divine punishment. Nevertheless, I don't feel any embarrassment about using something like these old prayers, at any rate: part of the point of prayer is to talk through our concerns with God, and these are our concerns at the moment.

As we know, sometimes conditions do change according to our prayers, and sometimes as a result of talking things through with God we learn more about how we should respond to them. As far as drought, fires and maybe shortages are concerned, we can be fairly confident that we're only at the outer edge of more strain and difficulty to come as the century moves on. In those circumstances, our prayers for peace and good order, and our determined attempts to enact them in our own lives, may be perhaps the most valuable work we as the churches of Godalming can do for our community.

Rev James Rattue, Chair of Churches Together in Godalming and District
rector@farncombe.org.uk

Churches Together news and events

Forthcoming Prayer Breakfasts

These take place at 8.30am on Saturday mornings.

26 September – Godalming Baptist Church

24 October – St John's Church Farncombe

28 November – Godalming United Church

News of the Churches and organisations

Godalming Baptist Church

Coffee Stop, Saturday 12 September

From 10.00am to 12.00pm at Godalming Baptist Church, in aid of The Chestnut Tree and Shooting Stars Children Hospices. Do call in and enjoy delicious homemade cakes and tea or coffee.

Book review: *Grace Choices* by Jeff Lucas

The Grace of God - His undeserved love and favour towards you - presents you with choices. Will you choose to see God through the lens of grace? Will you choose to see yourself - and others - the same way? Do you really believe in His free forgiveness - and are you willing to extend that forgiveness towards others?

In this powerful book, Jeff Lucas unpacks grace in its fulness and shows how, if you choose, grace can work through you and in you to transform your relationships, your church and your life. With his trademark mixture of insight, humour and passion, this book will show you how to take the grace God offers you as you choose to change your world.

Visit our library

Folk are very welcome to call in and browse and borrow a book during the summer break, but reception is closed in August, so a Friendship Lunch day is best - Thursday 7 August or Thursday 21 August, any time between 9.00am and 2.00pm.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

Online services: <https://guc.online.church>.

Service recordings: www.guc.org.uk, <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube>.

Collection for the Whitechapel Mission

A big thank you to everyone who contributed clothing, toiletries and non-perishable food items to our annual collection for the Whitechapel Mission to the Homeless in June and July. It was (as usual!) full to bursting by the close of collection.

Gambia shipping container project closure

Sadly, our Gambia shipping container project, transferring pre-used school and medical equipment, has now had to close, due to insurmountable distribution issues on arrival.

This amazing project has been a close association between our church and the Whitmore Vale charity, masterminded by Ryan and Sylvia Kelley. We are grateful to them and their volunteer helpers for organising and loading the 68 containers across the decades - to hugely benefit The Gambia. Meanwhile our other Gambia links flourish - for example the Ophthalmic Project funding cataract operations.

Tea-and-Talk Café with CHD Living

Starting Tuesday 1 September, from 11.00am to 12.30pm and first Tuesday of every month, this is a dementia-friendly community space for people living with dementia and their carers.

Friday lunches

Friday Lunches re-start on 4 September from 12.00pm to 1.30pm. Join us for modestly priced home-cooked food in support of local charities.

Pantomime read-through, Sunday 6 September

Pantomime read-through "Beauty and the Beast" thekeenenes@btopenworld.com

For other events, please visit www.guc.org.uk for a constantly updated rolling calendar

Roman Catholic Parish of St Edmund, King & Martyr, Godalming with St Joseph's Milford

Pope Leo's prayer intention for August

Pope Leo's prayer intention for August is for evangelisation in the city. Let us pray that in large cities, often marked by anonymity and loneliness, we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

CAFOD's Cancel debt, choose hope petition

Please sign CAFOD's 'Cancel Debt Choose Hope' petition. Many of the world's poorest countries have been plunged into debt crisis and forced to make huge repayments on high-interest loans to wealthy lenders, leaving them unable to properly fund essential healthcare and education services. Sign the petition here: <https://action.cafod.org.uk/page/189582/petition/1>

Please pray for our sisters and brothers living in countries where governments can't afford to pay for essential services like health and education. May we come together to build a better world where all people may flourish.

Parish Gathering on Saturday 15 August for the Feast of the Assumption

In August, our parish enjoys an annual gathering with an outside Mass in honour of this feast in the grounds of the Old Farmhouse, Elstead, kindly hosted by parishioner Richard Grey. There will be Afternoon Tea from 4.00pm, and all are welcome to explore and relax in the grounds. Outdoor Mass is at 6.00pm. We hope to be blessed with good weather! All are welcome, more info from godalming@abdiocese.org.uk

Assisted Dying Bill - Call to Action

This is due to be voted on for the second time in the House of Commons on 11 September, and we ask everyone in these weeks prior to the vote to contact MP Jeremy Hunt to urge him to vote against the Bill, even if you contacted him last year. A helpful link for this is: <https://righttolife.org.uk/Sept11vote>

Big Church Festival, 28 to 30 August

This is the UK's largest annual Christian gathering, featuring live contemporary music, family activities, and community worship. Formerly known as the Big Church Day Out, this three-day event unites tens of thousands of people from various denominations. Wiston Estate, West Sussex <https://bigchurchfestival.com>

Thinking of becoming a Catholic?

The next RCIA programme (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) begins in September. The group meets in person weekly, from 8.00pm to 9.30pm, and discusses all aspects of the Faith, and you can also join on Zoom. There is more info at: <https://www.stedsgod.com/rcia>. Please do get in touch with the RCIA organiser, Ian Honeysett, if you would like a chat or more info: honeysett@btinternet.com

Papal Blessing for Jo and Julian Lewry

On 5 July at 8.45am Mass at St John's, Fr Jonathan presented this award to Jo and Julian in honour of 30 years of volunteering for CAFOD. At the parish summer party that weekend they were also presented with a leaving card and flowers and good wishes for the next chapter.

Weekend Masses

Weekend Masses are celebrated at St Edmund's Godalming (6.00pm Vigil Mass) on Saturday evenings; and on Sundays at St John's Farncombe at 8.45am (and with coffee after Mass on 2 and 16 August); and at St Joseph's Milford at 10.30am.

Weekday Masses

The dates, times and venues of these vary so please check the calendar on the home page of our website: www.stedsgod.com

St Edmund's church remains open every day usually between 10am and 5pm (19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB).

Parish gatherings

We offer a warm welcome to newcomers at our regular parish gatherings:

- *Bumps, Babies & Toddlers* on Monday mornings at St John's Farncombe from 10.30am to 12.00pm, term time only. The group welcomes parents, carers and grandparents and babies, toddlers and pre-school children. For more info: eileen.hudson@gmail.com
- *SVP Afternoon Tea* The next one is on Wednesday 9 September. Our parish SVP group meets in person monthly and welcomes new volunteers. For more information phone SVP on 07379 108009.
- *Prayer Group on Monday evenings in Elstead* (phone Richard for details on 01252 702230), 5.00pm in winter and 7.30pm in summer.
- *Live Simply group* Our parish eco-group meets monthly online; to join the next meeting email Sarah in the parish office: godalming@abdiocese.org.uk
- *Bereavement group* This group offers support and meets monthly, usually on Fridays at 10.30am. More information: bereavementatsteds@gmail.com
- *EdsKnitters* This group knits for charities. If you can knit hats, gloves, scarves or blankets for adults and/or baby clothes please get in touch via the parish office: godalming@abdiocese.org.uk

www.stedsgod.com

Godalming Quakers

Sunday Meetings for Worship

The regular weekly worship session continues to be held on Sunday mornings, starting at 10.30am at the Quaker Meeting House in Mill Lane, and all are welcome.

Mid-week Meetings for Worship

Mid-week Meetings for Worship take place on the first Thursday of the month at the Meeting House. Meetings start at 12.15pm and last for 30 minutes, with a picnic lunch afterwards. Upcoming dates are 3 September, 1 October, 5 November and 3 December.

www.quaker.org.uk/meetings/godalming

Milford Baptist Church

TakeTime, Mondays 10.00am to 12.00pm

Free drop-in social group for everyone! Join us for tea, coffee and cake, optional activities and a friendly welcome. No booking required and it's all free. Check out our website for more information <https://www.milfordbaptistchurch.org.uk>

Mondays 10:00 - 12:00 At Milford Baptist Church, New Road, Milford, GU8 5BE

www.milfordbaptistchurch.org.uk

Items for next month's Link-up

Please send items for the September 2026 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow:

farrow.matt@gmail.com by **Friday 22 August**, for publication on Friday 29 August.