



LINK-UP

September 2020

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

Message from the Acting Chair

As our churches have reopened for public worship it has been a joy for many congregations to meet together in person once again. Even though wearing of face masks is now compulsory, singing is banned and the two-metre rule is still in force, the God we worship is unchanged. However, most of our churches will continue to maintain some form of online worship, and for many churches 'hybrid services' are the 'new normal'. We have yet to decide how to hold our Churches Together AGM, which is due to take place on 14 October but given the uncertainties that continue to face us, some form of 'hybrid' looks most likely. As we look forward to our AGM, I was struck by some words of Dean Dianna Gwilliams in a recent email from the Diocese of Guildford:

"As we make our tentative plans for the coming few terms can we consider who we are making plans for? And can I suggest that we consider making plans for building the kingdom of God, as well as for 'reopening', or 'getting back to normal'. Are there some things we've been doing for ages simply because we've never had time to stop and ask 'how is this building the kingdom of God'? This is a prayerful activity which requires no committee or meeting, just using the gift of time to listen to God. We may well find the answers surprising."

Revd Maggie Stirling Troy, Acting Chair of Godalming & District Churches Together

Churches Together prayer breakfasts

Our prayer breakfasts have moved online! You can join by visiting <https://zoom.us/j/9463914833> and using password **2020**. Each person to provide their own breakfast! Next event is Saturday 26 September at 8:30.

Godalming Community Store/Food Bank

Well done to everyone who supports this. The Community Store (which is run by The Farncombe and Godalming Corona Virus Support Group in partnership with Godalming Town Council) is now supporting 60 plus families and it is thought it will be needed for at least six months. Donations of food etc via Trolley Tuesdays will continue until January 2021, and other hub collection points are in place.

The Community Store will need to move out of the Wilfred Noyce Centre in September, so other locations are being considered. The Food Bank will continue as before.

The Food Bank and the Community Store work together, with items being collected and distributed by both as needed. Citizens Advice Waverley are also involved in helping families with advice and guidance.

Please keep supporting our local community.

Keep a look out for further information and if you have any questions or suggestions please contact Michael Stubbs, who is our representative on the Town Council Community Store Working Group, on michaeleashing@aol.com.

News of the Churches and organisations

The Parish of Godalming – St Peter and St Paul’s Church and St Mark’s Church

It was a joyful occasion when St Peter and St Paul’s Church opened the doors for private prayer on 3 August. We are offering a session for private prayer during August on Mondays and Fridays from 11:00 – 13:00.

Sunday services continue via Zoom, but we are working towards a safe return to worship in St Peter and St Paul’s church in September.

parishofgodalming.org.uk

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

It was no surprise though still a shame that we concluded it would not be possible to hold our popular annual Village Show in any form this year. All being well, like so many other events, the Show will return in 2021. Slimming World will be the first of our external hirers to start using the church facilities again, starting on Tuesday 1 September.

www.farncombe.org.uk

Godalming Baptist Church

Godalming Baptist Church. CIO wishes to appoint an administrator. This post is initially part-time for 12 hours per week to include Friday mornings. If you are interested in this role, please view the job advert, job description and application form on our website.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

Reopening

We will take our first tentative steps towards reopening with our first morning service on Sunday 30 August at 10:30 - to be led by Rev’d Keith Beckingham, Superintendent of the Wey Valley Methodist Circuit. Things will, of course, be very different:

- Entry via the “new” foyer doors
- Attenders’ contact details to be recorded (and destroyed after 21 days) for tracing if necessary
- A one-way system, so that exit after the service will be via the “old” Bridge Rd porch
- Face-coverings for all (except those with physical or mental health issues)
- Hand sanitiser freely and clearly available
- Social distancing of 2m in operation, so numbers will be restricted
- No pre-service breakfast, or post-service coffee, tea etc
- No communal singing or band music
- No creche

Until further notice – no Toddlers’ Group, no Messy Church

Joining online

After so long apart, many of us are looking forward to meeting up with friends again and worshipping together. However, for a variety of reasons a number of our congregation – both near and far – will be unable to attend. So the online services will continue to be streamed real-time every Sunday at 10:30 at <https://guc.online.church> and are available for viewing later at www.guc.org.uk or YouTube channel bit.ly/GUCYouTube.

Private prayer

There will, at other times, be some limited access for private prayer – please phone 01483 420459.

www.guc.org.uk

St Edmund King & Martyr Godalming with St Joseph's Milford Roman Catholic Churches

Back to the Pews...

It has been so lovely to be able to worship as part of our Community back in our churches once again. Fr Jonathan is now celebrating two Masses on a Saturday in the morning at 10:00 at St Joseph's Milford and at 18:00 at St Edmunds in Godalming. On Sunday there is a 9:00 at St John's at Farncombe and a 12:00 at St Joseph's Milford which has enabled over 100 parishioners to return to church. Still no singing but Fr Jonathan has sourced some evocative music to play at the Communion. He also still manages to squeeze in an Online Liturgy of the Word at 10:30 at - GoToMeeting Virtual Parish 450-922-301 t: 020 3713 5028 – access code 450-922-301 –for those still shielding or who may be unwell or just fearful of returning. This will change on 5 September with the Milford Mass moving to 10:30 and an online Sunday Parish Angelus at 12:00 with one or two Sunday Readings, a song and some bidding prayers to provide an opportunity to catch up before Sunday Lunch with some “Prosecco and Prayer”.

Lectio Divina

Many of you experienced this very special way of praying with the scriptures for the second time on 22 August at the online CTiG Prayer Breakfast, when Fr Jonathan used this way of praying to help us to hear the “God who speaks” and to find that God is not indifferent to our struggles and search for meaning. We reflected on St Peter's declaration about Jesus and appointment as Leader of the Church. The passage is taken from the NRSV St Matthew's Gospel 16:13-20. If you would like to continue with this way of praying or are curious, do join us on Wednesday evenings from 19:30 to 20:45 on GoToMeeting Virtual Parish 450-922-301: 020 3713 5028 – access code 450-922-301

Parish Pastoral Plan

Fr Jonathan has used this time to reflect on the way forward for our Parish. It is hard to believe that next month he will have been our priest for a year. The proposed Parish Pastoral Plan has been circulated to the Parishioners for comment.

Update on Buildings

Fr Jonathan has been looking into the possibility of developing St Edmund's to become our Parish base and he has circulated a paper with both the plans for St Joseph's and St Edmunds for consideration.

Back to School

There will be a special service of thanksgiving for our Teaching Staff and pupils as we welcome them back at the start of a new year. It is hoped that the First Communion Service will take place in September to allow children who were due to make their First Communion in June to receive the sacrament.

Sources of Practical Support

Love One Another Fellowship If you would like help from our team of parish volunteers do not hesitate to call the help line number (07593 121430) or send a message via the parish email or Fr Jonathan.

Godalming Food Bank is still providing vital support to many. For latest update and details, including new collection points see: www.parishofgodalming.org.uk/ourchurch-of-st-marks/food-bank

Some Food Vouchers are available from the Diocese for those in need. Please speak to Fr Jonathan or Sarah in the parish office.

Parish Welfare Fund aims to support those who are struggling at this time to afford basic necessities. If you need a bit of help or know someone who does, please don't hesitate to contact Fr Jonathan, in confidence. The SVP are also able to help.

<https://stedsgod.com>

Godalming Quakers

Online Meetings for Worship

We continue to hold online Meetings for Worship on Sundays using the Zoom platform: <https://zoom.us>, as well as virtual coffee breaks on Friday afternoons. These have allowed us to worship and socialise together in spite of the physical limitations.

www.godalmingquakers.org

A rather different Ride+Stride for churches - Sat 12 September 2020

Ride+Stride for churches on Saturday 12 September 2020 is a sponsored bike ride or walk between churches, exploring and enjoying town and countryside in Surrey and will be run differently this year according to Government COVID-19 guidelines. Run by the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust, it takes place annually and the money raised helps to repair churches, chapels and meeting houses throughout the county.

This year with churches closed for so long and many having lost income, it is more important than ever to help them conserve their buildings. Half of the money you raise goes to your nominated church, half for grants to help maintain Surrey's churches. Find out more and sign up now at www.surreychurchespreservationtrust.org/ride-stride

Items for next month's Link-up

Please send items for the October 2020 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow: farrow.matt@gmail.com by Tuesday 15 September, for publication on Tuesday 22 September.