

LINK-UP

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

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Message from the Chair

A new year brings new challenges and opportunities. We must continue to find ways to proclaim the message of salvation in Jesus Christ and to express our faith through acts of love and service towards each other and the local community. How can we, individuals, churches, and collectively, contribute to rebuilding our society as we cope with the continuing effects of the pandemic?

It is heartening to see so much going on in our local churches – as the contents of Link Up clearly show. I would draw your attention in particular to the United Service at St John's, Farncombe, on Sunday 23 January. This corporate act of worship demonstrates so well how much we share in common – and what still divides us. Please come along and support this service if you can.

The Executive Committee meets on Monday 31 January to prepare for the next Churches Together Council meeting on Wednesday 23 February. As things stand, it may be safer to hold both meetings online. Please remember us in your prayers as we seek to discern God's will for the direction Churches Together should take in the coming year.

James Toon, Chair of Godalming & District Churches Together

Churches Together prayer breakfasts

The January Prayer Breakfast will take place on Saturday 22 January. However, whether it will be in person or on Zoom has still to be decided. We will notify people of the decision by email and on the CTiGD website nearer the time.

News of the Churches and organisations

Parish of Godalming

We will be taking great care to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone who joins us for our services. We will continue to monitor guidance from the Government and from the national church and the Guildford Diocese.

- We encourage people if possible to take a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) before coming to church.
- Face coverings are compulsory whilst in churches, even during the singing of hymns.
- The choir will keep masks on throughout the services and remove them to sing; all choir members will have taken an LFT before the service.
- There is alternate pew seating at the back of St Peter and St Paul's, and chairs will be well spaced out at St Mark's to allow for those who wish to socially distance.
- Laminated signs will be available on entry for family groups, couples and individuals to place on the pew beside them to ensure sufficient space between seating.
- We encourage the use of hand sanitisers.

All services are safeguarding-compliant.

St Peter & St Paul

On all Sundays in January there will be a 10:00 Holy Communion Service.

Every Tuesday at 12:00 we offer a short, said Holy Communion service with a Thought for the Day homily.

Children's ministry

Sunday Club is an all-age group for children aged 3 years to 13 years. Our group meets during the 10:00 Holy Communion service. We learn about the Bible with a combination and weekly variation of stories, chat, games, drama and craft. For more details of our activities please contact Sarah Bryans at godalming.church.office@gmail.com.

A Vision for Godalming

Please continue to pray about the future vision for our parish. The next PCC meeting on 10 January 2022 will discuss and seek to reach agreement about the most effective method of working with Busbridge & Hambledon. We expect to set up a number of small groups to facilitate the discussions, and everyone in our churches will be encouraged to share their questions or comments with the small groups so that any future vision will be shared and owned by us all.

New baby group

A new baby group (newborn to crawlers) is starting at St Peter and St Paul's and will run on Wednesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:00 during term time. The first session will be on Wednesday 12 January 2022. The group will be led by Vickie Nye, our Children and Families worker. We hope to welcome and support some new families, and there will be space for up to eight families. For more details please contact Vickie at godalmingparishoctots@gmail.com.

Alpha Course

We thank God that the Alpha evenings went well and pray they are helping all of us in the group to continue to grow in our Christian understanding and to develop spiritually. We have been blessed by a number of our church members who have been or are due to prepare meals for those attending: thank you all very much. The next Alpha Course will start on Wednesday 27 April 2022, and we already have six people booked. Do please contact Canon John Harkin or Sue Harkin if you would like to join the next course, or to offer catering assistance.

St Mark's

All services start at 10:00. There is a balance of services each month including an All Age Service on the first Sunday, and Holy Communion and different Bible-based acts of worship on

the other Sundays. The services are set in a small, informal and friendly setting, including prayer, music and activities with something for everyone.

Smart Tots

This is a new church-led activity for parents and toddlers at St Mark's. The group meets on Wednesdays, running from 9:00 to 11:00. The aim is to offer a welcoming space for toddlers and parents to socialise and meet new people and make friends. If you would like to support the group by helping with refreshments or welcoming parents, then please contact Rev Sheila Samuels at curate.godalming@gmail.com.

Foodbank

The Foodbank requirement list is updated on a monthly basis on the website. Your Foodbank donations are important, and any items you wish to donate should be taken to St Mark's Church and Community Centre. If you would like to donate to the Foodbank by bank transfer, please contact Karen Milton, our Community Centre Co-ordinator, at stmarkscentre@googlemail.com, who will provide the bank details.

We need volunteers to help out on a Monday afternoon from 12:00 until 14:30. Helpers provide a warm welcome and hospitality to people needing to use the foodbank. Helpers also help with stocking shelves and packing parcels. If you would like more information, then please contact Rev Sheila Samuels.

www.parishofgodalming.org.uk

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

We were above everything else relieved to have got through Christmas without having to cancel any planned events! Like last year, we held back on the most risky occasions such as Carols by Candlelight, and held three short mini-Crib Services on Christmas Eve.

We hosted a couple of Christmas concerts by outside organisations including Guildford Jazz Society and Big Group Sing, again with nothing going wrong at the last minute. We have plans for new ventures in 2022 but it's hard to develop with so much uncertainty in the situation. We're pleased to be hosting the United Service on Sunday 23 January.

May I commend to everyone our relatively new service of Compline online on the second Sunday each month? There will be an order of service and a link on the website, www.farncombe.org.uk/events.

www.farncombe.org.uk

Busbridge&Hambleton Church

Job opportunity

BHC is looking for a part-time Assistant Manager who can help bring the vision for the Yew Tree Café to life, and oversee the delivery of excellent coffee, food and service to our active church and local community.

The details for the post are all here:

<https://www.bhcgodalming.org/vacancies/2021/7/20/yew-tree-caf-manager-f4nse>

The building project has been delayed, but we are aiming for the Yew Tree Café to be opening in February 2022. As much as the facility, fundamental to opening is the right person or 2 to manage the café, and other staff to support.

The Café Management Team can be reached via yewtreecafe@bhcgodalming.org if you have any questions.

Services

Our services continue live and online and can be found on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/bhcgodalmingonline>

www.bhcgodalming.org

Godalming Baptist Church

May we wish you a blessed and a peaceful New Year.

The Rock

The Rock children's church for 5-11yrs continues to meet weekly with fun planned children's sessions whilst parents are in church. 10:00 Sunday mornings. All welcome!

Friendship lunch

Friendship lunch takes place on Thursdays. We are so grateful to various clergy and others who are willing to come and share a thought with folk from our community. If you are able to share in this way, please contact Sally on 01483 428646 or via pollard3@hotmail.co.uk. We would love to hear about any charitable events, a hobby, testimony or life experience that you are able to share. You are welcome to stay for lunch too!

Golden Moments

Our Golden Moments get together for senior citizens takes place fortnightly on Wednesdays from 14:30 to 16:00. Come and enjoy afternoon tea and chat, with an interesting talk or discussion. Contact Eric Jarman on eandbjarman@btinternet.com for more details!

Sing for Fun

Our singing group for dementia sufferers and their carers, friends and family continues on Tuesdays from 14:00 to 15:00. Please contact Janet on 01483 414019 for information or just turn up and sing!

Life issues events

Our first Life Issues session 'Bereavement' will be on Saturday 5 February at Godalming Baptist Church (subject to any COVID restrictions) led by Revd Peter Jackson who has a wealth of experience and understanding of bereavement and had led 'Insight into bereavement' at Waverley Abbey. Please see attached poster and flier. We would be very grateful if you are able to display a poster. To book a place for this very worthwhile session please contact Sally Pollard on 01483 428646 or e-mail pollard3@hotmail.co.uk

Further Life issues for your diaries are

- 'Decision Making' and the will of God led by Andy Peck on Saturday 23 April
- 'Autism' led by Suzette Jones on Saturday 25 June
- 'Growing Old Disgracefully!' led by Dr Martin Brunet on Saturday 8 October

Fusion

We are delighted to announce that the *Fusion* group for 7-11yrs will restart on Wednesday 19 January from 18:00 to 19:00 with a New Year party in our church! This group is run by the Trinity Trust team with support from GBC.

Farewell to our Church Administrator

Sadly, our Church Administrator will be leaving us in January to start a new role as Administrator and Operations Coordinator at the Spire Church in Farnham. Her last day with us is Wednesday 5 January, and we wish her all the best in her new position!

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

Continuing high COVID infection rates mean that advance planning is necessarily cautious.

However we continue to worship, witness and serve online at <https://guc.online.church> where you should also be able to join in the chat, to share greetings and/or prayer requests before, during or after the service at 10:30 every Sunday. Recordings are available through our website (www.guc.org.uk) after the services.

Our charitable link with The Gambia is as strong as ever, and another shipping container is due to be loaded on 14 January (COVID restrictions, container availability permitting). An office in Ascot is moving and is giving all the existing contents of its present premises (desks, filing cabinets computers etc) but it will mean that the container will be loaded at Ascot.

Pantomime rehearsals continued until the end of term in December, and at the time of writing, four performances of Dick Whittington are planned for the weekend of February 5th and 6th - traditional family fun with all-age cast. Hurry - tickets go quickly! Tel 01483 421433.

www.guc.org.uk

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

The Season of Christmas

Jesus, in his loving response to his Father, leaves his heavenly throne to become human and to truly share all the joys and struggles that go with it. His coming among us was not only in some distant time and place but is in our here and now. Our nativity cribs remain in our churches until the end of the Christmas season on the Baptism of the Lord on 9 January; our crib offerings raise funds to support the Catholic Children's Society's A&B Crisis Fund, which provides immediate help for local families in the diocese who are facing real hardship and have nowhere else to turn.

Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

We celebrate with Mass at 10:00 (St Joseph's) and 19:30 (St Edmund's) on Thursday 6 January.

Synod Discussion Groups

The new year brings an opportunity to participate in 'Synod 2021-2023; a two-year process taking place across the Catholic Church, and an important moment in the life of the world Church, with Pope Francis calling us all to reflect on the theme 'For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission'. It is an encouragement to us to grow as God's people, walking alongside one another, and alongside a broken world. It is an invitation for us to become outward and visible signs of Emmanuel for one another and instruments of Emmanuel for all those God comes to save. It is the first of many steps that we will need to take on this journey.

Synod discussion groups in our parish are taking place during January on Wednesday evenings at 20:00 on 12th, 19th and 26th, hopefully in person at Ladywell Convent. There will also be other Synod groups meeting locally, and an online option. For up to date information and to register please visit our web page: www.stedsgod.com/synod

Activities after the Christmas break

Bumps & Babes sessions start back on Monday 10 January at 10:30 at St John's, Farncombe; the monthly SVP Afternoon Tea is on the second Wednesday of the month at 14:30. To register to attend on Wednesday 12 January please phone Janet on 07990 717067; and the Prayer Group meets on Monday evenings at 20:00 in Elstead. All are welcome and please phone Richard for more information on 01252 703830.

Lectio Divina

A small group meets on Wednesday evenings for Lectio Divina at 19:30, and during January the group will meet face-to-face at Ladywell Convent at 19:00 – 19:45. You are always welcome to drop in and join us. Check the parish website for an update:

<https://stedsgod.com/lectio-divina>

Live Simply

This month our Live Simply group reminds us to take extra time and care with recycling Christmas waste, in particular your Christmas tree. The group recommends their 'Ten Step Guide to Living Simply', with Step 5 for January: 'Go digital free. Take time to switch off and unplug'.

Our Live Simply group welcomes new members; the group meets monthly and produces a monthly email newsletter so that you can receive ideas to inspire your Live Simply journey. Please contact jolewry@aol.com

Wintershall Stations of the Cross

This takes place on the first Friday of the month at 20:00; all welcome.

Mass Times

Details of our regular schedule of daily and weekend Masses can be found on the parish calendar on our website www.stedsgod.com. It is no longer necessary to book to attend Mass, but face coverings are required. Children's Liturgy resumes at St John's, Farncombe, on Sunday 9 January at the 8:45am Mass.

<https://stedsgod.com>

Feba

You are encouraged to join the monthly Zoom meeting held by Feba, to learn more about this amazing media organisation. The next meeting will be held at 19:00 on Wednesday 12 January, and the Zoom access details can be obtained from Shelagh at jimdogshome@aol.com

Items for next month's Link-up

Please send items for the February 2022 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow: farrow.matt@gmail.com by Friday 21 January, for publication on Friday 28 January.