



February 2024

LINK-UP

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict

Message from the Chair

The United Service at SS Peter & Paul's on Sunday 21 January raised £875.57 including Gift Aid, so Tony Bennewith who managed the collection mechanics tells me. This is a splendid total to divide between the Trinity Trust Team and the Cellar.

We can all see the benefits to our community of these organisations and other endeavours our different Christian communities can co-operate over, but sometimes the purpose of strictly ecumenical activities, ones that bring our fellowships together just for the sake of doing so, may seem a bit more remote and obscure.

Just occasionally, however, something will impinge that reminds us exactly why we strive to find ways of working together and praying together now and again. Old prejudices and problems between Christians may not be as far away as we like to think, especially as they get mixed up with other things which are nothing to do with religion at all. I'm reminded of the statement I once read about the great Victorian industrial city – it may have been Leeds though I'm not sure and it could have been anywhere – where there was a strict social hierarchy among denominations, with the Anglicans definitely at the top and the Wesleyan Methodists a bit below them (not the Primitive Methodists – they were way down the ladder), ending with the mainly Irish Roman Catholic population at the bottom of the chain of social respect and standing.

Not all our churches are equally affected in what we do by the old religious calendar but as Lent approaches with its emphasis on reflection and examination it might be fruitful to think about our instinctive ideas of one another, where they come from, and how God might view them!

Rev James Rattue, Chair of Churches Together in Godalming and District
jamesrattue@hotmail.com

Churches Together Prayer Breakfasts

Confirmed Prayer Breakfasts this year, all at 8.30am:

24 February, St John's Farncombe
23 March, Godalming United Church
25 May, Godalming Baptist Church
22 June, Busbridge Church
27 July, Milford Baptist Church
26 October, St John's Farncombe
23 November, The Cellar

April and September dates still to be settled.

News of the Churches and organisations

Godalming Minster

Godalming Minster unites the parishes of Godalming, Busbridge and Hambledon. It was formally established on 1 January 2024. The new PCC was voted in on 7 January, and the launch service took place on 14 January at Godalming Minster Church Street (St Peter & St Paul's) with the Bishops of Guildford and Dorking, the Mayors of Waverley and Godalming, the MP for SW Surrey, Jeremy Hunt, among the community representatives. For the full story see <https://www.bhcgodalming.org/a-word-from/2024/1/19/godalming-welcomes-new-minster>

The Contemporary congregation, now led by Rev Simon Willetts, has moved from Busbridge to Church Street and gathered there for the first time on 28 January. A new 5.00pm Choral evensong is starting on 4th Sundays at Church Street from February. Most other congregations remain unaffected, but the new service pattern can be found here:

<https://www.bhcgodalming.org/sundays>

We are in the process of updating everything, the website being the last to move to the new online domain: godalmingminster.org.

To mark the start of Lent there will be an intergenerational Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday at Godalming Minster Franklyn Road, and an 8.00pm Ash Wednesday service at Godalming Minster Hambledon.

godalmingminster.org

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

We were delighted to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Sunday 21 January with a celebration of Evensong jointly with our friends from the Roman Catholic parish, and the wedding of our friends Angela and Chris on Saturday 20th had so much input from their congregation at Emmaus Road in Guildford that it virtually counted as an ecumenical event too. We have been battling with gas leaks and heating difficulties but carry on with our Development Plan from last year, seeking ways of rooting our future work in prayer and improving aspects of what we do currently. Lent of course begins on 14 February, and our keeping of the season will follow the customary pattern.

www.farncombe.org.uk

Godalming Baptist Church

Games afternoon, Friday 2 February

Our monthly light-hearted Games Afternoon will take place on Friday 2 February from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. Come and enjoy various games; Scrabble, Bingo, Uno, Quiddler to name but a few! Do come and bring a friend!

Coffee Stop, Saturday 3 February

We have a monthly Coffee Stop on Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00pm in aid of a different charity each month. There is no charge for coffee and delicious home-made cakes, but donations are much appreciated. The next Coffee Stop is on Saturday 3 February, and all contributions will go towards the vital work of Godalming Good Neighbours, a wonderful team of volunteer drivers who provide transport for a very small donation to appointments and events for those in need. If you are shopping in town, please do call in. We would love to see you!

Visit our library

Our library is open weekday mornings from 9.00am to 12.00pm (subject to bookings). Please do come and browse our large selection of a range of books to inspire, encourage and equip us, plus books on various life issues we may face.

Book review

Our Book Review for February is *Say the Right Thing* by Carolyn Lacey (see attachment) How hard that can often be! However, this inspiring book encourages us to focus on what the Bible teaches us in speaking with love, compassion, wisdom, comfort, hope and praise.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

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

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

Looking back

On 31 December we were delighted to welcome back the Pratt-Morris-Chapman family from their new posting with the Methodist Church in Uganda, for the baptism of their youngest child Catherine. Readers with long memories will recall that over 20 years ago we hosted Grace (mum – then a teenager) for her sixth-form years at Godalming College. It was a joyful colourful occasion with Grace's parents over here from West Africa – Grace's father being the Most Rev'd Titus Pratt ex-Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in Ghana.

Continuing Bible Study

Three-week series "Whatever happened to ... Jesus's Disciples?" Tuesday 6 February 10.00am, repeated on Thursdays 1, 8 February 7.00pm.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs Pantomime

Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 February. Always a great coming-together of the organisations and generations within the church community. Four performances; advance booking strongly recommended. Tickets £8, children free. Contact beckylkeene@gmail.com

Lent Study

Our Monday Evening Group has been following the URC's Daily Devotions <https://devotions.unc.org.uk/todays-daily-devotion> (based on St Mark's gospel) and will be meeting for study, discussion and prayer on Monday evenings from Monday 19 February. For more info and to join in, contact pastoral.assistant@guc.org.uk

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

www.guc.org.uk

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

Pope Francis' prayer intention for February

Pope Francis' prayer intention for February is for the terminally ill; that all who are sick and in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

Lent

We start the Season of Lent with Ash Wednesday Mass (with the distribution of ashes) at 10:00am at St Joseph's Milford and 7.00pm at St Edmund's Godalming.

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross is on Fridays during Lent at 7.00pm at St Joseph's Milford.

CAFOD Lent Fast Day

CAFOD Lent Fast Day is on Friday 23 February, and there are Appeal talks at Masses on the weekend of 16/17 February.

Thursday Evening Lent Small Groups at Franciscan Centre at Ladywell

Stress free conversation about our faith in a welcoming and friendly setting. We will be following the 'Invited' course, which includes themes such as: Jesus as Lord of our lives; becoming Missionary Disciples; what is the Church and how do we fit in? Reconciliation; and Holy Week. Tea and coffee from 7.00pm with the session starting at 7.30pm, Thursdays from 15 February. If you would like to join us, please sign up via the website calendar.

CAFOD Big Lent Walk 2024

Are you up for a challenge this Lent? Could you walk 5K (10,000 steps) each day for the 40 days of Lent? Our BIG Lent walk helps raise funds for CAFOD to help people overcome poverty. We are starting on Ash Wednesday and finishing on Easter Sunday, and we hope to raise £2000! If you would like to join our team, please contact Jo Lewry on jolewry@aol.com.

Prayer for Diocesan Pastoral Plan

Bishop Richard recently published his updated Pastoral Plan, and new to the plan is that our parish will be joined with others in the Guildford deanery to become a single parish, cooperating much more closely, to serve the sacramental and formation needs of the communities in a flexible way and freed to bring their gifts to the service of the church in mission. Prayerful discernment on how this this will look in practice and the impact on the future of our churches in Godalming is our focus going forward; and during February we will start our consultation to hear the voice of parishioners on the options before us, all supported by our prayer effort and Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

Wintershall Stations of the Cross

These are on Friday 2 February at 7.00am; all welcome
<https://www.wintershall.org.uk/stations-cross>

SVP Afternoon Tea

This month the tea is on Tuesday afternoon (13 February rather than Wednesday). Details of time/venue are below.

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, with Children's Liturgy, (and with coffee after Mass on 4 and 18 February); 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 our website:
www.stedsgod.com

Parish gatherings

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

- Bumps & Babes on Mondays at 10.30am at St John's, Farncombe
- Live Simply Our parish eco-group meets monthly on Zoom. Joining details from Jo: jolewry@aol.com
- SVP Afternoon Tea on Tuesday 13 February at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church, Elstead (phone 07379 108009).
- Prayer Group on Monday evenings (phone Richard for details on 01252 702230).
- St Edmund's church remains open every day for private prayer, usually between 10am and 4.00pm. (19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB).

www.stedsgod.com

The Franciscan Centre Ladywell

Lent Retreat

Led by: Fr. Caoimhín Ó Laoide OFM

Date: 16 – 18 February

Suggested offering: £180

A Reflective Lenten journey led by Fr Caoimhin O Laoide

“The Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness. (Mark 1:12)”

During Lent we're invited to shed what is superfluous and enter into the desert with Christ.

What are our deepest desires? Have they become lost in the clutter and busyness of our lives? What is preventing me from living an authentic life in the Spirit?

All are welcome to a retreat experience which includes optional daily Mass and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, if desired.

Led by Fr. Caoimhín Ó Laoide OFM, a Franciscan friar, who will integrate insights inspired by the spirituality of Sts. Francis and Clare of Assisi into the celebration of this holy season.

Praying the Passion – Living the Gospel

Led by: Brian Purfield

Date: 15 – 17 March

Suggested offering: £180

In Holy Week the gospels of Mark and John are enticing gateways into both the familiar sequence of the passion story and the perhaps less known, but very beautiful, world of each evangelist's portrayal of Jesus.

Brian Purfield is a team member at the London Jesuit Centre and has worked alongside the Jesuits since 2001. Prior to that he taught at the International Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury. He studied theology at the Gregorian University, Rome and at St. Bonaventure's University, New York. His particular interest is in deepening a knowledge and love of the Scriptures for people, young and old, at a level that they can understand and seek to apply to their daily lives.

Franciscan Triduum Retreat

Led by: FCL Team

Date: 28 – 31 March

Suggested offering: £255

Come join us at the Franciscan Centre Ladywell for our Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday Evening to East Sunday.

Join our community as we celebrate the Easter Triduum, as we recall and journey with Jesus in his last days, from his final meal with His disciples to His resurrection from the tomb. Experience the liturgies as part of a community and take time and space in our beautiful centre to reflect more deeply on these profound events. Be alongside the Franciscan family, as we celebrate Easter in our unique way with daily prayer, reflections, liturgies and celebration.

Our programme of events offers participants the opportunity to experience the Beauty, Goodness and Generosity of God in a reflective hospitable Franciscan environment, through retreats, quiet days and workshops. There is also the opportunity for Spiritual Direction from our Spiritual Directors.

We offer a place that allows for a deepening of your relationship with God, a place of welcome and safety as you navigate closer to your Creator. Take quiet time away from the haste of

everyday life, either on a retreat or by engaging in the programmes and workshops we offer. The Franciscan Centre Ladywell is open for anyone seeking some space and quiet time.

Any enquiries or to book your place please email us at franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk
<https://franciscancentre.org.uk>

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.

www.quaker.org.uk/meetings/godalming

Feba

Many countries in the world have intolerant societies or regimes which persecute Christians. Feba works in many of them through loyal local partners. You have an opportunity to pray for them at Feba's next zoom prayer meeting on Wednesday 6 February at 7.00pm. Further details from www.feba.org.uk/prayer

Items for next month's *Link-up*

Please send items for the March 2024 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow:

farrow.matt@gmail.com by **Friday 17 February**, for publication on Friday 24 February.