



November 2024

LINK-up

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict

Message from the Chair

In October's *Link-up*, I talked about the connection between our own spiritual and psychological condition as individuals, and the wider things that go wrong in society. That idea might be even more appropriate for November – the Month of the Holy Souls for Roman Catholics, and for all our church communities, in our different ways, Remembrancetide, with its themes of loss and memory. Not all memories are positive, and sometimes we find ourselves stuck in damaging recollections, that might assume a greater importance than they should as time goes on, rather than fading out of sight. Bad experiences from the past may affect our existing relationships and actions adversely, perhaps even having a bearing on matters like our political choices (I'm writing on the day of the US elections).

Occasionally bad memories are even fixed as part of Church life. For 250 years, until 1859, every Anglican church was supposed to hold a service on November 5th giving thanks for the nation's 'deliverance from malignant and devilish Papists' during the Gunpowder Plot, and everyone was supposed to attend it as well. Long prayers which to us would seem intensely partisan and violent were part of the liturgy, and the minister was commanded to read 'publicly, distinctly and plainly' the text of the Act of Parliament that established the service in 1605. It was no surprise that suspicion of Roman Catholics, especially, lingered so long when worshippers were, in theory, hearing this read at them every year.

It takes long exposure to the Spirit of the God of Peace to heal negative memories, and encouraging people within and beyond our church communities to engage in this work is one of the most valuable things we can do. I often reflect on the odd coincidence that the ancient observances of All Saints and All Souls have, over the centuries, been augmented by the festivities of 5 November, and then Armistice Day just a little while later: perhaps it means that God wants us to learn something!

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

Churches Together events

Friday 15 November, Open Meeting following the United Church Fellowship Lunch from 12.00pm. We'll be discussing the ways our churches can serve the community at Christmas.

Saturday 23 November, 8.30am – Prayer Breakfast, The Cellar Café

Wednesday 25 December, Churches Together Christmas Day lunch, Godalming Baptist Church

Christmas lunch

We are delighted that the Christmas Lunch will again be hosted by the Baptist Church and run by the experienced team. To volunteer on the day, contact Gillian Martin (gmartin1502@outlook.com or 01483 429640); to come to the lunch, contact Carole Goff-Wood (shosholozo@hotmail.com or 07501 208814 or via post at the Baptist Church).

News of the Churches and organisations

Godalming Minster

Harvest

Godalming Minster had a wonderful fortnight of Harvest Festivals in the first two weeks in October, culminating in Harvest Lunches at Church Street and Hambledon.

Farewell to Canon John Harkin

We said a fond farewell to Canon John Harkin and his wife Sue at Church Street on 13 October, rounding off 40 years of John's ministry. John and Sue have since moved to Cornwall to enjoy their retirement, and we send them with all our love and thanks.

Vacancies

Godalming Minster is currently advertising three vacancies: Associate Minister for Franklyn Road, Mission and Evangelism, Children's Pastor 4-11s and Younger Families Pastor 0-4s. The ads can be found on godalmingminster.org/vacancies.

Celebrating the lights

Preparations are under way for the Godalming Lights Procession on Sunday 24 November. The procession will finish in Godalming Minster Church Street for a short and uplifting carol service which we are calling "Celebrate the Light(s)! All are welcome, but we are asking people to sign up so we know how many to expect. GTC will be provided mulled wine and mince pies for those in church.

godalmingminster.org

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

By the time *Link-up* is sent out we will have been through All Saints and All Souls, and a Sunday Space service based around a conversation between myself and Dr Tim Leunig from the London School of Economics about the connections between economics and faith.

We'll be looking forward to our Advent Sunday Service of Light on 1 December at 6.30pm when the choir will be including some special items. Our friends from other churches are especially welcome then, and also some of our other events may be of interest – Compline Online on Sunday 10 November at 7.30pm (check the website for details) and our new monthly crafting group 'Cotton On' (contact Sue Petty on 07818 582336).

www.farncombe.org.uk

Godalming Baptist Church

Christmas door wreath workshop, Saturday 30 November, 10.00am

Come and learn how to make your very own Christmas door wreath. All materials supplied, and friendly instruction given in an informal atmosphere. You will learn how to moss the frame, make bows, wire cones and attach all manner of materials to your design. Please book early as for health and safety reasons numbers are restricted. Please contact Clarissa on 07957 569732 or clarissaharris27@gmail.com to book a place. Cost £30.

Book review: Nearing Home - Life, faith and finishing well, by Billy Graham

Scripture is filled with examples of men and women whom God used late in life, often with great impact - Noah, Abraham, Moses and Elizabeth, to name but a few. 'For them, growing older wasn't something to be denied or dreaded' says Billy Graham, 'it was to be embraced as part of God's plan for their lives'. In this book, Billy reflects on his life, contemplates what God has still in store for him, and he shares how he has dealt with grief, uncertainty and loss by focussing on the promises found in the Bible.

Visit our library

The GBC library is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.00pm when Reception is open at GBC, (booked on Weds fortnightly). You are warmly welcome to browse and choose a book.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

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

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

Remembrance Sunday

On Sunday 10 November, there will be no morning service as we will be supporting the Town Service of Remembrance at the Burys War Memorial.

Churches Together meeting

On Friday 15 November at 12.00pm there will be a Churches Together meeting and lunch at GUC – come and enjoy the home cooking of our regular Friday Lunches in support of local charities. All are welcome.

Advent Bible Study: Joseph

Tuesday 26 November and 17 December at 10.00am, repeated Wednesday 27 November and 18 December at 7.00pm.

For more information and other future events, 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 November

Pope Francis' prayer intention for November is for those who have lost a child. Let us pray that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community and may receive peace of heart from the Spirit of Consolation.

Theological Café - Heaven, Hell and Purgatory - with Fr Jonathan

This is a new 'drop-in' discussion group open to anyone who enjoys discussing aspects of faith. The next session is on Wednesday 20 November at 7.30pm, on the topic 'Heaven, Hell and Purgatory', at the presbytery, 19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB.

New Youth Discipleship Group

Starting in November, every other Friday, from 7.00pm to 9.30pm at the Franciscan Centre, Ladywell, for young people turning 16+ who are serious about deepening their faith.

Includes pizza and fun – because good food and laughter are essential; real conversations that challenge and inspire us to reflect on life and faith; moments of prayer, worship, and quiet reflection – connecting us more deeply with God.

This is a group for those seeking to deepen their relationship with God, wanting to grow spiritually and live out their faith in a meaningful way. Wherever you are on your journey, you are invited to walk this path with us. For more information:

DavidBeresford@franciscancentre.org.uk

The month of the Holy Souls

November is the month of the Holy Souls, and the Blessing of Graves will take place in Milford cemetery on 2 November after 10.00am Mass at St Joseph's; in Eashing cemetery at midday

on 3 November; in Elstead cemetery at Woolfords Lane, at around 1.00pm on 3 November.

Operation Elf

This Christmas our parish is supporting Operation Elf, an initiative of the prison charity PACT, to enable prisoners to give a present to their children at Christmas. Every year more than 200,000 children are separated from their mums or dads through imprisonment.

To support the appeal, please buy a gift for either a boy or girl, aged 0-12, costing around £10, for example Lego, a doll, a craft set (but no books or chocolates or sweets), or purchase a gift voucher to the value of about £10 for teenagers, and leave your labelled gifts in the collection boxes at church when you come to Mass. The gifts will be delivered to HMP Send in time for Christmas. If you have any queries please get in touch with Sarah in the parish office.

Write to your MP to Stop the Legalisation of Assisted Suicide

The House of Commons has heard the first reading of a new bill on assisted suicide. The timing of the bill makes it probable that MPs will have a vote on assisted suicide before Christmas this year. We are invited to contact our MP to make our view known that life is a gift to be cherished and cared for from conception until natural death and to express concern at the way in which such a measure would impact and endanger many who are disabled, vulnerable or disadvantaged. www.abdiocese.org.uk/news/act-now

Wintershall Stations of the Cross

Friday 1 November at 8.00am, followed by a light breakfast.

<https://www.wintershall.org.uk/stations-cross>

A talk at Ladywell Convent 'A Global Journey of Faith - The Life and Mission of the Franciscan Sisters'

Sr Jane Bertelsen, FMDM Congregational Leader, will give this talk on 23 November, 10.15am to 12.00pm at the Franciscan Centre. £5 pp (under 25s free), includes coffee and cake and a tour of the chapel. Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/guildford-district-knights-of-st-columba>

The parish website: www.stedsgod.com gives more information on our parish activities.

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 3 and 17 November); 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

Parish gatherings

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

- Bumps & Babes on Monday mornings at St John's Farncombe from 10.30am to 12.00pm. The group welcomes all mums to be, as well as mums (and grandparents!) with newborns and toddlers.
- SVP Afternoon Tea on Wednesday 13 November at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church, Elstead (07379 108009).
- Prayer Group on Monday evenings (phone Richard for details on 01252 702230), starting at 5.00pm.
- Live Simply, our parish eco-group meets monthly, with the next meeting on Thursday 7 November at 8.00pm. Joining details from Jo: jolewry@aol.com

St Edmund's church remains open every day usually between 10.00am and 5.00pm. (19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB).

www.stedsgod.com

The Franciscan Centre Ladywell

Advent Retreat (non-residential only)

We are hosting an Advent Retreat from 6 to 8 December in preparation for Christmas. We will have input, prayer, sharing and quiet time to reflect and also to listen to what God is speaking into our lives.

All are welcome to come and explore and prepare with us.

Residential places are all full but space for day guests who wish to participate are still available.

For enquiries, please [email franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk](mailto:email.franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk) or phone 01483 675575.

Days of Reflection

We are excited to invite you to our new Days of Reflection at the Franciscan Centre Ladywell! Our first gatherings will take place on Saturday 11 and Tuesday 28 January 2025. They will be held on the 2nd Saturday and 4th Tuesday of each month from 9.30am to 4.00pm.

These retreat days welcome all who seek renewal, inspiration, and fellowship in a warm and inviting atmosphere. The first theme will be hope, offering insights that promote spiritual growth and unity. You can look forward to a comforting mix of input, prayer, conversation, and personal space for reflection.

A delicious, homemade lunch, lovingly prepared with Franciscan hospitality, will be provided. The cost for each retreat is £25.

We warmly welcome everyone to join us in this journey of reflection and discovery. For more information, please feel free to reach out to us at franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk or telephone 01483 675575.

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](mailto:at.franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk)

Our website is: <https://franciscancentre.org.uk> and our phone number is 01483 675575.

<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

Milford Baptist Church

New minister

Hi I'm Revd Rachel Watson, and I moved to Milford in August with my husband Paul, and two of our four (adult) children, to take up the role of pastor at Milford Baptist Church. I had been co-pastor at a small church in Southampton, part time, whilst also working in an NHS psychiatric hospital as a Mental Health Chaplain. I felt God calling me to full time church ministry, and following a period of discernment, have accepted the call to become their new minister.

I have heart for mental health and wellbeing for people in all their diversity. I see it as an important part of church life to be a place of welcome and for church to be somewhere where all can flourish in community. Milford Baptist Church is a friendly and welcoming fellowship, with a small but vibrant youth group on Friday evenings and a thriving toddler group on Wednesday mornings (see below).

I am looking forward to getting to know and work with other churches in the area, as together we seek to bring the good news about Jesus to people around us.

Youth and family groups

Toddlers: ages 0-4 - Wednesday 9.30am to 11.00am

Be.Kids: ages 5-11 - Friday 5.00pm to 6.00pm

Be.Youth: ages 11-14 - Friday 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Feba

Join us on Zoom via www.feba.org.uk/prayer to pray for a media organisation with partners in all the world's trouble spots at 7.00pm on Wednesday 6 November.

Items for next month's *Link-up*

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

farrow.matt@gmail.com by **Friday 16 November**, for publication on Friday 23 November.