



February 2025

LINK-up

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict

Message from the Chair

Easter Day – the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox – falls nearly as late this year as it can be, so we have plenty of time to draw breath before we move into Lent. At St John's, I'm trying to put together a Lent course which aims at giving laypeople resources to maintain the spiritual life of the church if there's no ordained person (or at least, no full-time one) around. It's not that I have any intention of going anywhere immediately, but you never know what might happen!

It's remarkable how our church communities differ from one another in theology and organisation, and what we think 'ordination' is, and yet in each of them the relationship between the minister and the rest of the community ends up looking very similar. Even in churches which start out aiming at having a flat structure with no ordained people at all tend to develop the same kind of thing as some people become specialists in the spiritual stuff. As St Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12, this probably should not come as a surprise – 'one has one gift from God, and one another'. But if a church community delegates the organisation of its spiritual life on one person or even a designated set of people it can be unhealthy. In fact, as we all have a direct relationship with God, so the spiritual life of the church community we belong to is something we all take part in; but making sure that happens requires deliberate effort.

It's worth making the point that this applies to ecumenical endeavours too. Churches Together (nationally) was established because it was felt that the old Councils of Churches were dominated by the clergy, and laypeople needed to be more involved. But it's proven easier to say than do!

If, at St John's, we can get through to Easter with a deeper sense of the idea of the Church as including all of us, it will have been a good Lent!

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

Churches Together news and events

United service

We are very grateful to Revd Adam Payne and the good people of Godalming United Church for hosting the United Service this year, with the theme 'Do You Believe This?'. Representatives of all the churches took part, the building was full, and many worshippers expressed how uplifting and well-organised it was. Offerings for the Cellar and Trinity Trust Team amounted to just under £800.

Prayer breakfast

The next prayer breakfast will be at St John's Farncombe at 8.30am on Saturday 22 February.

News of the Churches and organisations

Godalming Minster

Stay Curious. Try Alpha.

The next Wednesday evening Alpha course will start on 29 January 2025, with a no-obligation intro session – but it's not too late to join from week two on 5 February. Find out more at <https://godalmingminster.org/alpha>

The Bereavement Journey

The next seven-week course will start on Monday 3 February. The six-week course is run by churches nationally, and is for anyone who has been bereaved recently or some time ago. More details can be found at <https://godalmingminster.org/tbj>

Prime Time afternoon event with Bishop Michael Baughen - "Lord for the Years"

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided has been acclaimed as one of the 20th century's finest hymns and it is included regularly in church services across the world; indeed you may have even sung it yourself. But were you aware that the now familiar tune of this hymn was composed by a current member of Godalming Minster's Prime Time?

Michael Baughen, a former Bishop of Chester and composer of the music for this much loved, modern hymn has spent the last decade living in Godalming and worshipping at Busbridge Church, and yes - regularly attending Prime Time events for those over 50.

We are delighted that Michael has accepted our invitation to come and talk to Prime Time about his involvement in this modern classic and what the meaning of the hymn is for him.

The interview with Michael will be followed by the customary Prime Time Tea & Cake and time to chat with friends about what you have heard throughout the afternoon. This is a free event, although donations on the day will be welcomed to help cover expenses.

Please email penny.naylor@godalmingminster.org, our Seniors Ministry Leader if you would like to attend. Transport can be arranged for those who need a lift, and offers from drivers are welcome too!

godalmingminster.org

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

Our home-grown enquirers' course, 'Treasure in the Field', continues into February, and the small but enthusiastic group of takers encourages us to build this into our programme for next year too. We had a very successful Messy Church in January. We carry on grappling with necessary works to bring our fire safety procedures and infrastructure up to scratch. Easter is very late this year, giving us the opportunity to develop a Lent Course for the first time in some years, concentrating on equipping laypeople spiritually for a time when ordained clergy may not be available.

www.farncombe.org.uk

Godalming Baptist Church

New Pastor

We have our new Pastor, Jack Curtis, joining us in February - exciting times! Jack will work alongside our dear Pastor Peter. We warmly welcome Jack, Candace and their two children to Godalming and pray that they will settle happily and quickly into their new home and schools.

Coffee Stop, Saturday 8 February, 10.00am to 12.00pm

Do call in to Godalming Baptist Church for a break from your shopping to enjoy tea or coffee

and delicious homemade cakes! There is no charge, but donations much appreciated towards the vital work of Godalming and Villages Community Store. We would love to see you!

Book review for February

The Book your Pastor wishes you would read (but is too embarrassed to ask). Pastors are people too and in this warm practical book, Christopher Ash helps us to see that if we want a joy-filled church we need to have a cared-for pastor (minister).

Visit our library

Do call in and browse in our library and choose a book from our wide selection. There are books to encourage us on our faith journey and with different life issues we may encounter. The library is open during term-time Monday to Friday mornings from 9.00am to 12.00pm. Do call reception on 01483 414544 to check re lettings before coming. We also have a new stand of information leaflets about various charities, CAB, Age UK, Emerge, benefits etc that may be of benefit.

Life Issue - Supporting those living with Cancer and beyond, Saturday 15 March

From 10.00am to 12.30pm (coffee from 9.30am) led by Daphne Bleach. Please see attached flyer with information about this helpful, encouraging and informative morning. Please contact Sally to book a place on 01483 428646 or pollard3@hotmail.co.uk

Outing to Milestones Museum, 24 April

On Thursday 24 April, Friendship Lunch and Community Outing will be visiting Milestones Museum in Basingstoke. Explore the Museum of living history, step back in time to see a Victorian schoolroom and station, have a go in a Penny Arcade and buy a ration of sweets and see a wonderful display of vintage cars. Please call in to Godalming Baptist Church, reception open Monday to Friday mornings to collect a booking form.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

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

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

Celebrating the centenary of Ruth Searles

At the end of November, we celebrated the centenary of our friend Ruth Searles with a party for family (some of whom travelled from Australia) and friends. She is held in great affection and attends church regularly. Ruth and her twin sister Annie were born in Northumberland, moving south after the Second World War. The babies arrived prematurely, and the supervising doctor told their mother to "Enjoy them for the day, they're not here to stay" – how wrong he was! Ruth trained as a pharmacist, working in Westminster Hospital, then St Peter's, and finally St Luke's. She has two children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. In lieu of presents, Ruth asked well-wishers to make a donation to the Farncombe foodbank, raising £400.

Annual Pantomime - Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Weekend of 1 and 2 February – 4 performances. Tickets £10, children £5. Contact beckylkeene@gmail.com

Messy Church, Saturday 8 February, 3.00pm

"Let there be Light!" Bible-themed fun for all the family: crafts, games, church trail, storytime and songs, party tea. messy.church@guc.org.uk

www.guc.org.uk

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

2025 is a Jubilee Year

Pope Francis writes: "Christian life is a journey that requires special moments to nourish and strengthen hope, an indispensable companion that helps us glimpse the goal: the encounter with the Lord Jesus". The Jubilee is one of these significant moments. There are many events this year associated with the Jubilee, one of which is a Holy Year Pilgrimage to Rome led by Fr Jonathan from 17th to 21st November, organised by JC Journeys. To book see <https://www.jcjourneys.com/irj> or contact the parish office for a paper form. Cost £975.

The Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)

This will take place on Sunday 2 February, and Masses that weekend will be of the Feast.

Youth Discipleship Group

This new group gathers every other Friday from 7.00pm to 9.00pm, and all young people turning 16+ who are serious about developing their faith are most welcome to come. The February sessions are on Fridays 14 and 28 February. Parents/carers are welcome to stay at the centre and have a cup of tea and a chat with others and Fr Michael. Any questions, please do get in touch, and please spread the word to ensure that the young people who would benefit from this group hear about it. DavidBeresford@franciscancentre.org.uk

Mass with Anointing of the Sick

All are invited to this Mass at 2.00pm on Sunday 16 February in the chapel at Ladywell Convent, followed by afternoon tea. To sign up, visit: <https://stedsgod.churchsuite.com/events/js8tl1zd>, and if you need a lift or more information, please contact Godalming SVP on 07379 108009. The sacrament of the sick is available for all members of the church whose health is 'seriously impaired by old age or sickness in mind or body'. If you are unsure about whether this sacrament is appropriate, please speak with Fr Jonathan.

Theological Café

The next evening with Fr Jonathan will take place from 7.30pm to 9.30pm on 12 February at 19 Croft Road, on the theme: exploring the Catholic approach to the moral life. All are welcome, and refreshments are provided.

Wanted – Microsoft Teams Trainer!

To help build our capacity for mission, Fr Jonathan would like to hear from anyone who can offer training on Microsoft Teams to deanery staff and volunteers, either on a voluntary or paid basis.

CAFOD Big Lent Walk 2025

Are you up for a challenge this Lent? Could you walk 5km (10,000 steps) each day for the 40 days of Lent? Our BIG Lent walk raises funds for CAFOD to help people overcome global poverty. We are starting on Ash Wednesday and finishing on Easter Sunday, and we hope to raise £1,500! To join our team, visit <https://parishes.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-edmund-godalming2024> or contact Jo Lewry on jolewry@aol.com

Wintershall Stations of the Cross

Wintershall Stations of the Cross are on Friday 7 February at 8.00am; all welcome. <https://www.wintershall.org.uk/stations-cross>

SVP Afternoon Tea

This month the tea is on Wednesday 12 February at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church, Elstead (phone 07379 108009).

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 2 and 16 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 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.
- Prayer Group on Monday evenings (phone Richard for details on 01252 702230), starting at 5.00pm.
- Live Simply group, our parish eco-group meets monthly online; the next meeting is on Thursday 6 February, 8pm. Joining details: jolewry@aol.com
- Our parish SVP group meets in person monthly. The next meeting is on Thursday 26 February at 7.30pm. Joining details: 07379 108009.

St Edmund's church remains open every day usually between 10.00am and 4.00pm. (19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB).

www.stedsgod.com

The Franciscan Centre Ladywell

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 8 February and Tuesday 25 February 2025. They will be held on the second Saturday and fourth 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. 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.

Lent Retreat, 21 March, 4.00pm (check in) to 23 March at 2.00pm (Residential offering £190, Day visitors £90).

The Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness, Mark 1:12

During lent, we are invited to shed what is superfluous and enter into the desert with Christ.

Join us at the Franciscan Centre Ladywell to prepare for Easter with a time of prayer,

reflection, input and sharing.

Lent is a time of stepping out of the ordinary, looking within, noticing how God is at work in our lives and listening for the invitation for greater depth.

What is it that God is inviting me to? How do I want to respond?

What do I need in my life in order to find the courage to walk with Jesus to his cross and mine?

Understanding Scripture – Jesus’ Journey to God – The Passion in Luke, Friday 28 March, 4.00pm (check in) to Sunday 30 March, 2.00pm (Residential offering £190, Day visitors £90)

A weekend Scripture Course and Retreat with Brian Purfield

The four gospel passion narratives have created in the imagination of most Christians a kind of composite account of the events of Jesus’ last meal, arrest, trials, and crucifixion and it may be hard to focus on one account without “interference” from the other three. On this weekend we will focus on Luke’s account and his distinct perspective on Jesus’ Passion. There will be space for prayer, reflection and conversation as we prepare to listen to Luke’s Passion proclaimed on Palm Sunday.

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.

Easter Triduum Retreat, 17 April, 3.00pm to 20 April, 2.00pm (Residential offering £270)

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.

Any enquiries or to book your place on any of the above, please contact us at franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk or 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

Feba

Zoom prayer meeting for Feba, a media organisation with partners in many newsworthy places in the world. Wednesday 5 February, 7.00pm to 8.00pm, details from www.feba.org.uk/prayer

Items for next month's *Link-up*

Please send items for the March 2025 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow:

farrow.matt@gmail.com by **Friday 21 February**, for publication on Friday 28 February.