



Surrey Faith Links Newsletter

February 2018



'Peace begins with a smile' 😊
(Mother Theresa)

Surrey has been busy organising and attending various interfaith events; watch out for more interesting events including pilgrimages, peace walks, football, debates and talks plus a very topical event 'Do women have a role in leading religion?'

If you would like to get involved with interfaith or would like to know more, please get in touch.

Thank you

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Interfaith Peace Vigil



On Thursday 1st February, Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum (GGIF) held a peace vigil to mark UN Interfaith Harmony Week (www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/) at St Joseph's Church in Guildford.

Kauser Akhtar, Faith Links Adviser introduced the peace vigil by giving a background to Interfaith Harmony Week followed by faith perspectives from Bibhas Neogi, Baha'i GGIF member, Geoff Hunt, Buddhist Chaplain at the University of Surrey, Andrew Normal, Vicar at St Nicholas Church Guildford, Meeta Joshi, Hindu Chaplain at the University of Surrey and Ray Wicksman, Jewish member of the GGIF.

Main Faith Festivals in February 2018

- 1st—Candlemas (Pagan)
- 8th—Nirvana day (Buddhist)
- 13th—Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
- 13th—Mahashivratri (Hindu)
- 14th—Ash Wednesday (Christian)
- 14th Feb till 31st March—Lent (Christian)
- 16/17th—Losar (Buddhist)

David Munro, Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner was invited as one of the guest speakers who recognised and appreciated the work of the police. He shared a story from the Christian perspective and thanked GGIF for inviting him to be a part of the peace vigil.



Bibhas Neogi, Baha'i



Meeta Joshi, Hindu



David Munro, Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Further contributions were made by those in attendance. It was a well attended event, which brought people of different faiths together to share their universal faith perspectives on 'doing good to the neighbour'.

For future events organised by Guilford and Godalming Interfaith Forum please see page 8 of this newsletter

St Mary's Interfaith Awareness Event

On Thursday 25th January, a forum that regularly meet at St Mary's Church Frensham invited Kauser Akhtar, Faith Links Adviser to talk about Interfaith Work in Surrey and what it is like to live in Surrey as a Muslim woman.

The forum heard about all the Interfaith Forums in Surrey and some of their activities, followed by an insight to Islam and particularly the position of Women in Islam. This was followed by an open Q&A session with interesting discussions.

If you would like to host a similar event, please get in touch.



Religious and Cultural training for Staff & Volunteers

Do you have staff that would benefit from some training or awareness of religious and Cultural practices and beliefs? Or perhaps you would like to know more about the Faith communities in Surrey?

If you are a group who meet informally and would like to hear from different faith perspectives, Surrey Faith Links is a one stop shop for all.

Please get in touch:

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New Rabbi Inducted at Weybridge Synagogue

North West Surrey Synagogue welcomed over 300 guests on Sunday, 14 January 2018 for the Induction of Rabbi Kath Vardi, the largest attendance ever at the shul.

Distinguished guests included the Mayor of Elmbridge, local clergy from several religions, representatives from the Movement for Reform Judaism, Liberal Judaism, Leo Baeck College and other rabbis. Also present were many founding members and their families, celebrating the start of a year of festivities marking the synagogue's 50th Anniversary.

The induction programme featured reflections and wishes to Rabbi Kath from NWSS' four previous rabbis, including Rabbi Dr David Zucker and Rabbi Fred Morgan.

Following welcome remarks by Chairman Ian Lancaster, a short Study in Chevruta was led by Rabbi Josh Levy, who ordained Rabbi Kath and is the Rabbi at Alyth Gardens. Rabbi Levy also led the Mincha Service, with singing support from Rabbi Hannah Kingston, a classmate of Rabbi Kath's at Leo Baeck College.

Rabbi Kath was inducted by Rabbi Professor Tony Bayfield CBE, the rabbi at NWSS from 1968 – 1982, Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris, the principal at Leo Baeck College, Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh, the Dean and Director of Jewish Studies at Leo Baeck College and Rabbi Dr Jacqueline Tabick, Convenor of the Reform Beit Din and the rabbi at NWSS from 1998-2013.

Rabbi Dr Middleburgh injected some humour into the solemn induction by paraphrasing Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If', noting that Rabbi Kath 'should always have a grip on the situation', and if she didn't, any of these four rabbis would help her get one.

Rabbi Kath gave the Closing Blessings and the event ended with a lavish tea.

Ian Lancaster said that it was a delight to see the synagogue so full and hoped that it wouldn't be another 50 years before this happened again. "It was an honour to have three of the College's senior staff and two of our previous rabbis (Rabbi Bayfield is both) to induct Rabbi Kath," he said. "This was an indication of the high regard she is held in by her teachers and colleagues, as well as the strong connections our community retains with its previous rabbis."



Interfaith Network e-bulletin

The January/February issue of IFN's e-bulletin is now available at www.interfaith.org.uk/e-bulletin

Just a few of the items covered are: Faith and public life updates, including 'Opt out' consent for organ donation and the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting | Inter faith projects, programmes and developments | Inter faith resources | Jobs, internships and volunteering opportunities with an inter faith focus | Funding opportunities | News of forthcoming inter faith events across the UK

Is Privacy a Luxury or Necessity

The Woking Debates kicked off with their first debate on Sunday 20th January at Christ Church in Woking where Helen Bayliss from Surrey Police and Griff Ferris from Big Brother Watch debated on the subject.

Helen explained what sort of data is held by the police, restrictions that the police officers have and certain data is deleted currently after 2 years but soon it will be deleted after 1 year.

Griff spoke about privacy and the lack of it due to the Government and other agencies holding peoples personal information. He mentioned the thousands of camera's across the country that scan car registrations and other data which is held without people knowing about it. He also gave an example of 'where it went wrong' and an innocent person's life was turned upside down. More information: <https://bigbrotherwatch.org.uk/>

There were strong points raised on both sides leaving the audience to decide on the balance between security and excessive private information being held.

The Woking Debates Team have organised further debates, details available on page 7 of this newsletter. More information also available at: www.wokingdebates.com



Faith in the Courts

On Tuesday 30th January, the Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum invited Judge Georgina Kent to talk about faith issues in the courts at Sacred Heart Church in Cobham. Judge Georgina referred to article 9 of the Human Rights Act and freedom of religion. She explained how accommodating the courts are in terms of ones faith for example, a witness can choose which Holy Book he/she wishes to make an oath on and the officers are aware of the sensitives or how to treat the Holy Books. Trials can sometimes take a long time, courts allow time for prayers or for people to attend religious services.



Judge Georgina gave some examples of faith related cases, one of which was an attack on Kingston Mosque on 11th November 2010 where approximately 30 men aged 25-30 threw bottles, sticks, broke glass, urinated on the premises and placed bacon at the Mosque to offend Muslims. Three individuals were convicted and the others could not be identified via the CCTV footage.

She also gave an example of how powerful faith is and how it can be abused by religious leaders; a man claimed to be a Prophet and persuaded people to give money to him to enter into the Kingdom of God. Between the people donating it was a total of £200,000 from which some people ended up in serious debt. He was proven to be a fraudster and given 5 years in prison.

Attendees were given plenty of time to ask questions. It was a very educational evening and a lot of interest from the attendees.

Holy Trinity Visit Shah Jahan

On Saturday 13th January, members of the Holy Trinity Church Bramley along with the Vicar, Revd Vicki Burrows and some students from St Catherine's School visited the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking. This was a follow up from a talk held at the Church 'The True Face of Islam'. The group was given a guided tour, observed the congregational prayer and asked questions to the Head Imam, Hafiz Hashmi, who recited a short prayer for them in Arabic.



Holy Trinity, in keeping up the momentum of interfaith work, have also planned another interfaith event, '3 Women, 3 Faiths', where Revd Vicki Burrows (Christian), Kauser Akhtar (Muslim) and Meeta Joshi (Hindu) will speak on Friday 2nd March 2018.

WPOF Members Tea

Woking People of Faith (WPOF) organised an event for people who have helped them at various events to thank them for their time and effort, on Saturday 3rd February at St Dunstan's Church Woking.



The new structure of WPOF was explained by Philip Goldenberg followed by a brief summary of some of the events WPOF have organised in the past from the Chair of WPOF, Simon Trick.

Marian Nash, Secretary of WPOF invited people to continue their support by volunteering for various projects led by the 'Events Committee'. More information: www.wpof.org.uk

Surrey Muslim Association AGM/ Substance Misuse Awareness Event

Over 70 people attended Surrey Muslim Association's (SMA) first AGM on Sunday 4th February at the Lakeview Community Centre in Horsell.

David Munro, Surrey Police Crime Commissioner was invited as a guest speaker along with Craig Matthews and Becky Beauchamp from Surrey Police to talk about police procedure in terms of drugs, the law and harmful effects of drugs. There were plenty of questions from the attendees about tackling the issue of drug misuse.



A representative of Tell MAMA, the online hate crime reporting service spoke briefly about what they do; a number of people in the audience had been victims of hate crime. Reporting of each incident was stressed at the event to identify particular problematic areas and/or to provide support to victims.

The event concluded with a buffet meal. For more information: www.surreymuslims.org

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Building a Stronger Britain Together programme

The Home Office programme Building a Stronger Britain Together is continuing to offer in-kind support such as social media training, technical assistance to help a group improve their website, or capacity building work to help a group protect more vulnerable individuals. It is open to bodies in England and Wales.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-a-stronger-britain-together>.

Garfield Weston Foundation Celebrates 60th Anniversary with One-Off Charitable Fund

The Garfield Weston Foundation has reached its sixtieth year of grant giving in the UK and has chosen to celebrate with a new one-off fund that offers grants of between £30,000 and £150,000 to registered charities, CIOs, places of worship and state schools.

The Fund is exclusively aimed at supporting capital costs. Groups in need of revenue funding should apply to the Foundation's main grants programme. Funding is available for:

- New community facilities.
- Improvement of community facilities.
- Items that require a sizeable investment e.g. purchase of minibus.
- Improvements to outdoor spaces and facilities for sport and exercise or community use.
- New buildings or extensions to an existing building for community use e.g. new kitchen, meeting room or storage facility.
- Improvements to, or renovation or refurbishment of, an existing building such as installing a toilet and servery in a rural church for community use.
- New fixed playground equipment, climbing walls or multiuse games area in a public playing field.
- Purchase of large or expensive items if it is crucial to supporting local people e.g. minibus for elderly day care, equipment for a training room, community café fit out.
- Purchase of land or property with a minimum of a 25 year lease with a clear community benefit.

Total project costs must be above £30,000.

The deadline for applications is 30 June 2018.

Further information can be found here: <https://anniversary.garfieldweston.org/weston-anniversary-fund/>

Funding websites

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations offers advice on fundraising and grants on its Knowhow Non profit site at <https://knowhownonprofit.org/funding>.

Funding Central - <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx> - is a free website for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises in England that provides access to thousands of funding and finance opportunities, together with tools and resources for supporting organisations to develop sustainable income strategies appropriate to their needs. Similar websites for funding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found at Funding Scotland - <http://www.fundingscotland.com/> - Wales Council for Voluntary Action - <http://www.wcva.org.uk/funding/search> - and Grant Tracker for Northern Ireland - <https://www.grant-tracker.org/>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Woking Debates 2018

Woking Action for Peace, LA21, Friends of the Earth, Quakers, Churches Together, Woking People of Faith and Surrey Faith Links work in partnership to bring you some thought provoking and topical debates.

- Is our democracy breaking down? Saturday 17th February
- Why are people living in poverty in 21st century Britain? Saturday 17th March
- What is the future of work? Saturday 14th April
- There will also be another debate on Saturday 19th May, details to be confirmed

As usual, there will be ample opportunity for local residents to share their views and concerns

The debates are held at Christ Church, Jubilee Square, Woking GU21 6YG

11.00 am till 12.30 pm (refreshments from 10.30 am)

For more information please contact Keith Scott: keithsc_2000@yahoo.com

Visit My Mosque Day



#VisitMyMosque Day is taking place on 18 February 2018 with over 200 mosques opening their doors to their neighbours of all faiths and none including Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking and Al Kharafi Mosque, Camberley. For details of opening times and other Mosques please visit the website: www.visitmymosque.org

Woking People of Faith Events 2018

Second Pilgrimage of Understanding

Date:- Saturday 3rd March 2018

Register: 09.45 at Christchurch, Jubilee Square Woking.

Route:- Christ church to Al Asr Centre to St. Mary's Horsell ending at Trinity Methodist Church

Refreshments: tea/coffee en route

Lunch: 13.20 Curry meal at Trinity Methodist Church, Brewery Road

Finish 14.20

Environmental Working Party

24th March 2018, 2 pm till 4 pm, Bedser Trail Car Park, Monument Road

Make friends while working together to pull up pine tree saplings to save the common for our wild life

Visit will end with a trip to the Peace Garden. For more information email John West:

john.west63@ntlworld.com

Ypres to Brookwood: Sunday 6th May, Last post ceremony and a guided walk around the cemetery. More information to come.

Football tournament: Saturday 30th June at Winston Churchill School.



Woking People of Faith

For more information please contact Marian Nash: secretary@wpof.org.uk, www.wpof.org.uk

Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum Events 2018

Interfaith Pilgrimage

Thursday 19th July 2018

The pilgrimage will take place in Godalming between different places of worship.

Details to be finalised, more information in the next newsletter.

Interfaith Service

The Annual GGIFF Interfaith Service to mark Interfaith Week

Sunday 18th November, St Nicholas Church, Guildford.

For further information please contact: Carolyn Neogi - 01483 415773 or

Bernard Jones - 01483 424257

Tom Cruise, The Rabbis and War Crimes

Jonathan Paull, the Jewish Studies Tutor at Eton College, is the speaker at the next meeting, on Wednesday 7th March, of the Staines branch of the interfaith organisation, the Council of Christians and Jews. He will be taking a difficult-to-understand Biblical text and making sense of it for today. The title of his talk is the intriguing: Tom Cruise, The Rabbis and War Crimes. All are welcome and we would be delighted if you invited friends and shared the event with members of your congregation

The evening is at Staines Synagogue, and as usual, we start at 8pm. There is no charge but we welcome donations.

Staines Synagogue is at Westbrook Road, off South Street, Staines TW18 4PR

Parking: There is parking available in Westbrook Road itself in the car park immediately opposite the synagogue.

Hearts and Minds: the Untold Story of the Great Pilgrimage and How Women Won the Vote

Saturday 24 March, 11am - 12.30pm.

Talk with Jane Robinson.

Drawn from diaries, letters and unpublished accounts, Hearts and Minds is the remarkable story of the Great Pilgrimage, a six-week protest march involving thousands of women which helped turn the tide in the long campaign for Votes for Women. As we celebrate the centenary of the vote with our March of the Women suffrage project, Jane Robinson sets the story of the march - which passed through Surrey - against the colourful background of the whole campaign.

This event has been generously supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Tickets are free but must be booked in advance.

Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, GU21 6ND.

Please book a place online, in person at Surrey History Centre or any Surrey Library or phone 01483 518737.

Jane will be selling and signing copies of Hearts and Minds on the day, price £20.00. Please bring the exact money or cheque.

More information: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/heritage-culture-and-recreation/archives-and-history/surrey-history-centre/heritage-events>

Epsom and Ewell Inter Faith Forum – 2018

- April 10th 7.30-9.30 Visit to Epsom Methodist Church
 May 3rd 7.00 for 7.30 'Faith and Community Relations – exploring our local responsibilities'
 Speakers: Jon Warnke, the Faith Emergency Response Coordinator, Diocese of Guildford and Hannah Paisley, the Epsom and Ewell Prevent Officer. Venue TBC
 June 3rd 1.0-1.00 Hindu Chariot Festival, Stoneleigh
 June 9th Iftar at the Islamic Centre, Epsom sharing the breaking of the Ramadan fast
 July 19th Visit to Coptic Cathedral, Stevenage

For more information or to confirm attendance please email Lynne Schofield: lynneschofield@gmail.com

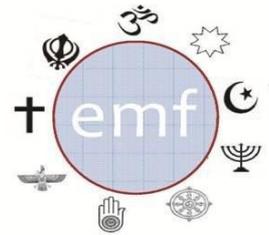
GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Seminar

Tuesday 20th February 2018 | 10 am - 1 pm | High Cross Church, Camberley

The new data protection regulations come into force in May 2018. For those of you that store data on individuals, either supporters, donors or service users, you must comply with the new regulations. If you would like to attend, please reserve your place by emailing info@voluntarysupport.org.uk

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum 2018 Events

- Visit to West London Synagogue, Wednesday 7th March 2018
- "Do women have a role in leading religion?",
1st May 2018, 7 for 7.30pm,
St. Mary's Hall, Stoke d'Abernon, KT11 3PX
Speakers: Bishop Jo Wells (Christian), Rabbi Kath Vardi (Jewish) and Julie Siddiqui (Muslim)
- AGM – theme "Spirituality & Wellbeing" 26th June 2018, 7 for 7.30pm, Venue TBA



For more information please contact Jackie Foster: jackie@fosterja.co.uk

Follow ElmbridgeMultiFaithForum on Facebook for regular updates.

"The role of the National Secular Society in the UK and internationally"

Sunday February 18th 7 for 7.30pm

Daniel Hall, Long Garden Walk, Farnham, GU9 7HX

Talk by Keith Porteus Wood after brief AGM. Keith was Executive Director of the National Secular Society from 1996 to 2017 and is now President of the NSS.

"The Happiness Course" Can we teach people how to be happy?

Sunday March 18th. 7 for 7.30pm

David Warden is chair of Dorset Humanists and an Honorary Member of Humanists UK. Together with colleagues he developed and ran a six-session course aiming to help people lead happier lives

Tea & coffee included. Other drinks available from the Hop Blossom Pub close by. Donation £2 to help costs

Hosted by **farnhamHUMANISTS**

Enquiries: 01252 723044 www.farnham.humanist.org.uk

Guildford & Woking Humanists open meetings

Tuesday 13th February

Speaker Charlie Yianoullou

Title: **Secularism Protects**

Britain today is one of the most religiously diverse countries in the world. That's why it is more important than ever that the state is neutral on matters of belief, treating all citizens equally and without bias. Find out the basic principles of Secularism and how it sets out to protect us all, both religious and non-religious. Do you have to be an atheist to be a secularist? What are the differences between humanism, secularism, theism, deism and atheism. Charlie is a member of the National Secular Society and of the Guildford and Woking Humanists. He has given many public talks.

Tuesday 13th March

Title: **The Psychology of the Paranormal**

Speaker: Professor Chris French

Tuesday 10th April

Title: **Assisted Dying: Does the law need to change?**

Speaker: Lesley Close

Where: The Guildford Institute in Ward Street, Guildford, GU1 4LH.

Tea/coffee and biscuits break at about 8.30.

There is no charge, but a small donation is requested of £2 or £3 (but not from students) to cover the speaker's expenses and hire of the hall. If anyone would like further information, please telephone Mike Adams (01483 233324) or David Simmonds (01483 800397),
E: david.simmonds40@gmail.com



Charity Walk for Peace (CWFP) 2018

Sunday 29th April 2018

Do you want to raise money for your voluntary group or charity? The Mayor of Runnymede, Councillor Ifti Chaudrhi in conjunction with the Runnymede Borough Council have organised a great way for you to do it!



Take part in a sponsored charity walk through 5 miles of Windsor Great Park on Sunday 29th April 2018 and Charity Walk For Peace will match-fund any money raised via sponsorship. Each organisation will need 10 sponsored walkers in order to qualify for the matched funding up to a limit of £2,000 per charity (application for matched-funding required, terms and conditions apply).

This a great opportunity to raise money for your small charity or community not-for-profit organisation but places are limited so get in touch soon if you'd like to participate. Contact Voluntary Support North Surrey on 01932 571122. If you're interested in finding out more about this event please attend the reception dinner which is to be held on Saturday 17th February at Bishopsgate School, Englefield Green.

There is no cost for the dinner but places are limited and attendance is by REGISTRATION ONLY.

To join the walk, register on the Charity Walk for Peace website <https://charitywalkforpeace.org/>



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