



Surrey Faith Links Newsletter

December 2018

*"A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. He will be called, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."
(Bible, Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6)*

Merry Christmas to all those celebrating and Season Greetings to everyone else! We've had an amazing Interfaith Week in Surrey, which you can read about in this issue. The Interfaith Forums are busy planning events for 2019, if you are interested in getting involved please feel free to contact me.

Some dates for your diaries on page 7 onwards for upcoming events and UN Interfaith Harmony Week coming up in February.

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Faith has no place in modern society!

An audience of approximately 50 people gathered to hear different perspectives on the place of faith in modern society. Jonny Blair (Christian) spoke about the social



impact of churches across the Country and support with various things, including food banks, mother and toddler groups, reducing isolation and helping the needy & vulnerable. Jennie Johnson (Humanist) said faith does have a place but beliefs should not cause harm to others. She strongly believes in equality and fairness and supports ridding of religious favour in three particular areas:

Marriage, parliament and in religious schools.

Naveed Arif (Muslim) said the morals and values of UK were built on Christianity but now people are moving away from faith. There is more access to knowledge but people are becoming more intolerant. He said without faith, there will be oppression. Islam is being misrepresented in the media and people are acting

Main Faith Festivals in December 2018

- 3-10: Hannukah (Jewish)
- 8: Bodhi (Buddhist)
- 21: Yule (Pagan)
- 24: Christmas Eve (Christian)
- 25: Christmas Day (Christian)
- 26: Zararosht No Diso (Zoroastrian)

wrongly in the name of Islam; they have become the oppressor. Meeta Joshi (Hindu) said faith brings humanity together in difficult times and religion teaches humanity. Not everyone has an ideal way of thinking, religion provides this. Hinduism teaches unity in humankind; religions need to evolve and not take away individuality.

Attendees were then given the opportunity to ask any questions to the panel of speakers and the event was concluded with sharing of food and further discussions.

The event was organised by Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum to mark Interfaith Week and was held at the Sacred Heart Church in Cobham.



For more information about Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum, please visit: www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk

“Building Bridges not Barriers”

Sunday 18th November, 4.00 pm at St. Nicolas Church, Guildford

Guildford & Godalming Inter Faith Forum (GGIFF) hosted a multi-faith Service at St. Nicolas Church in Guildford on Sunday. Due to renovation work at the adjacent community centre where this annual event usually takes place, the participants were able to enjoy the beautiful architecture and stained glass of Guildford's second oldest church, whilst listening to speakers from Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and Bahá'í traditions on this year's theme of 'Building Bridges, not Barriers', ending with an Indian Devotional dance from young Nishi Joshi. Several speakers referred to the many uplifting and encouraging events which have taken place in the area around Interfaith Week. Godalming Mayor Nick Williams welcomed all the Faith Communities and Interfaith Minister Jenny Miller concluded with a beautiful healing prayer. Thanks are due to Father Andrew for offering his church and chairing the proceedings.



GGIFF meets bi-monthly throughout the year as well as at occasional public events, and new members of any belief are always welcome.

Telephone Bernard Jones 01483 424257 or Carolyn Neogi 01483 415773 for more details

Surrey Police—Community Matters

Wednesday 14th November, Surrey Police Head Quarters, Guildford.

Surrey Police in partnership with the Multi Faith Chaplaincy team organised an event during Interfaith Week on ‘Community Matters’. Patrick Samuels, Police Faith Coordinator for Surrey Police introduced the event followed by DCC Gavin Stephens who spoke about Surrey Police’s 9 code of Ethics and how they linked in with the community. Rt Revd Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop of Dorking, Rabbi Kath Vardi, North West Surrey Synagogue, Hafiz Hashmi, Imam of Shah Jahan Mosque



and Charlie Yianoullou, Guildford & Working Humanists spoke on the subject from their respective belief perspectives.

It was a well attended multi-faith evening discussing policing & neighbourhood engagement with Surrey Police and people from all faith backgrounds across Surrey.

The panel of speakers were asked questions from the attendees on various topics from the faith and non faith perspective and some specifically about policing and developing a relationship with the community. The event was concluded with a delicious buffet spread.



'Who do we think we are?'

24th November 2018 at Parkview Community Centre, Sheerwater, Woking from 2 – 4pm.



The idea for this Woking People of Faith event came from the BBC TV Programme 'Who do you think you are?' Often the celebrity gets a shock when they delve into their relatives' lives in the past. Similarly, it was thought that we might get some surprises when we looked into our personal journeys to Woking. Philip Goldenberg welcomed everyone and ably compered the session. The participants were sorted into mixed groups around four tables. A clip from Youtube introduced the idea that our DNA shows that we come from many different races. Then a set of questions provided discussion points to investigate where

each person was born; where their parents were born and finally where their grandparents came from. As well as looking at the geographical migration – if any; occupations and life styles were deliberated.

The plan was to stop for afternoon tea around a table laden with scones, cake, rice cakes, samosas and biscuits, but everyone was finding the conversation so intense and absorbing that people simply went and helped themselves to a plate of food; then returned to their table to continue chatting.

Towards the end of the time, each table was asked to feedback their observations and the places were recorded on a map of the world and/or the United Kingdom. There were very many countries represented, including South Africa, Nigeria, Ukraine, Kashmir, Pakistan and India. Also several Scots had travelled down to London to find work. WW1 and WW2 had impacted the lives of several families. Others had moved for economic or educational reasons. Some noteworthy family members were an International Hockey Player for India; a food tech expert in Health & Hygiene; and a Major in the British Army at a time when non-white soldiers could only aspire to junior positions.



Everyone commented that it had been a very enjoyable afternoon and that they felt they had really got to know people from other faiths and ethnic backgrounds, who all lived in Woking.

For more information about Woking People of Faith, please visit: www.wpof.org.uk

Fostering Asylum Seeking Children

Do you think children should have opportunities to have a better future?

Do you have a spare room in your house?

Are you interested in gaining extra income?

Then we would like to talk to you about Fostering. In Surrey we have a number of ways that you can care or support children and young people. We will provide all the help needed during the process, a social worker, support groups, allowances for the children to cover food, clothing and pocket money. And we will also give you a weekly allowance for assuming the role of a foster carer.

We have different programs, such as long term, supported lodgings, respite, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, short term and even just for a couple of weeks. We welcome everyone to be a foster carer.

For these children, YOU can be a light, at the end of a very dark tunnel.

YOU could be the person that changes their lives.

If you'd like to know more, please contact our Fostering Recruitment Officer, Mariana Bracho.

Email: Mariana.BrachoEscalante@surreycc.gov.uk | Phone: 07971 123144



Faith and Cultural Awareness Training for Staff & Volunteers

It has become evident in today's increasingly multicultural society that constructing and developing relations between people of all faiths and none is important for work life as well as social cohesion.

Employers should have a basic level of knowledge of different faiths to get a better understanding of staff/customer needs and requirements.

It is also good for staff to have some level of knowledge and awareness of faiths and cultures for a better experience with the people they work with.

The training delivered by Surrey Faith Links aims to equip individuals with the basic knowledge of different faiths beliefs and practices as well as cultural customs and traditions, which may have an impact on their work and help them have a better understanding.

The people delivering the training are volunteers who practice their faith.

Please get in touch: Kauser Akhtar, Faith Links Adviser

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Surrey Heath Celebrates Peace

The 115 or so adults and children who crowded into the Pavilion, West End village on 17th November had come to celebrate Peace Day as part of national Interfaith Week, organised by Surrey Heath Faith Forum (SHFF).

Ray Wicksman, Chairman, welcomed everyone and summarised the background and aim of SHFF, namely, to promote knowledge, mutual understanding and respect for the different beliefs, practices and traditions of people in Surrey Heath.

Kausar Akhtar, Surrey Faith Links Adviser, then briefly explained that Interfaith Week provided an annual opportunity to focus on interfaith understanding and cooperation in many different ways.

The programme that followed illustrated some of those ways.

Speakers from five faith traditions, Baha'i (Foad Rahimi) Jewish (Ray Wicksman), Muslim (Imam Abdul Malik), Christian (Area Dean Rev Jonathan Hillman) and Hindu (Meeta Joshi) gave brief talks on 'What peace means to me' sharing their thoughts and quotations. Each talk was followed by other participants with a song, some with musical accompaniment. One song was performed by children from Al Rayan primary school.

Simon Trick, Chairman of Woking People of Faith, led the final song 'We are Drops' with guitar accompaniment and encouraged the audience to join in the chorus which they did enthusiastically using projected lyrics.

Rev Susan Bolen, curate of St. Peter's Church Frimley, presented a short video, 'Momondo', in which people from all over the world were invited to take a DNA test to trace their ancestry and then gathered to see the results. It turned out they had much more in common with other nationalities than they imagined. Foad then related some surprises from his own DNA test which indicated 5% Irish ancestry!

Rev Jonathan then presented prizes to children who had entered the SHFF competition, via their respective primary schools, to create a poster or poem also on the above theme.

SHFF presented a bouquet of flowers to Rev Susan to congratulate her on her recent appointment as Priest-in-Charge of St Paul's Church, Wimbledon Park, and as a thank you for her dedicated leadership as Chairman of SHFF and especially her innovative approach to interfaith school assemblies.

Finally, everyone was invited to enjoy the varied and tasty world food buffet, prepared entirely by SHFF committee members and friends and, especially for the children, to experience henna and face painting.



Interfaith Network UK E-Bulletin

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

Just a few of the items covered are:

- Marking of Armistice100, Ashers bakery case and safeguarding
- Inter Faith Week highlights
- Inter faith projects
- Award schemes and calls for information, including on 'open door days'
- Inter faith related jobs and volunteering opportunities
- Funding sources
- Some forthcoming inter faith events across the UK



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Tampon Tax Community Fund

UK Community Foundations is working in partnership with Community Foundation members to deliver the Tampon Tax Community Fund. Grants of between £5,000 and £10,000 will be offered to successful applicants. The Tampon Tax Fund allocates funds generated from the VAT on sanitary products to projects that improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls. Organisations that will be funded will aim to support vulnerable women who experience various difficulties such as low confidence, mental health issues, homelessness and teenage pregnancy.

For more information visit

<https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/our-programmes/tampon-tax-community-fund>

Funding for Caring for Older Carers in the UK

Bupa UK Foundation is accepting applications to its 2018 programme.

The theme of the 2018 funding programme is 'Caring for our Carers'. This theme was selected in recognition of the fact that 'carers make a vital, hidden contribution to the health and wellbeing of the nation, yet they can often feel socially isolated, lacking support and a sense of community' and 'many carers report that caring has taken a toll on their own health'.

Not-for-profit organisations whose work in the UK focuses on supporting and improving the health and wellbeing of older carers can apply for grants of up to £20,000.

For more information: <https://www.bupaukfoundation.org/>

Big Lottery Fund:

The Big Lottery Fund, funds projects and activities that make communities stronger and more vibrant, and that are led by people who live in them.

We support charities, community groups, and people with great ideas - local or national, large or small. We also bring people and groups together: to share experiences, learn from each other and try new ways of working.

To find out more: <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding>

Heritage Lottery Fund

From the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks we love, from precious memories to rare wildlife, we use money raised by National Lottery players to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about.

For more information: <https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding>

Arts Council

We invest in art and culture for a lasting return. We're looking for organisations, artists, events, initiatives and others to apply for our funding and help us achieve [our mission of great art and culture for everyone](#).

Use our [funding finder](#) if you're interested in applying for funding.

Or, if you want to find out where we get our money from and how we invest it, you can [learn more here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum Events 2019**Tuesday 19th February: Visit to West London Synagogue, hosted by Rabbi Helen Freeman**

Coach leaves Thames Ditton Centre, Mercer Close, Thames Ditton, KT7 OBS at 9.30 am and arrives back to the Thames Ditton Centre by 4.00pm. Transport cost: £15 per person. Payment can be made by cheque to EMF or in cash on the day to Geoff Morris. Post cheque to:

Geoffrey Morris, Edale House, 32 Milner Drive, Cobham, KT11 2EZ

Limited number of places, please book early to avoid disappointment. For more information:

E: geoffreymorris@emas-bc.co.uk | T: 01932 868454

Tuesday 30th April: Refugee event (refugee speakers and much more) 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm start. Further details to follow.

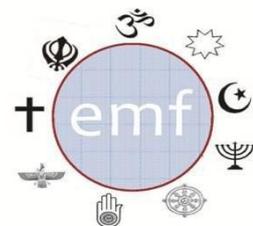
Tuesday 25th June: AGM and Conference. 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm start at St John's Church, 1 The Furrows, Walton-on Thames, Surrey, KT12 3JQ

Saturday 12th October: Evening Gala/Cultural Celebration, 6.00 pm at St John's Church, 1 The Furrows, Walton-on Thames, Surrey, KT12 3JQ

For more information please email:

Secretary: Kauser.Akhtar@cofefeguildford.org.uk

For more information please visit: <https://www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk/>

**Woking People of Faith Events 2019****Can Faith Institutions Save Our Planet?**

Faith institutions' buildings should help to save our planet as well as reflect their beliefs and worship'

Join Woking People of Faith at this event where the Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson will speak from a Christian perspective and Shaukat Warraich, Founder and CEO of Faith Associates, will speak from the Islamic perspective. Tuesday 12th February, 7.00 pm at HG Wells Conference Centre, Woking.

To book a free ticket:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/can-faith-institutions-save-our-planet-tickets-53534072853>

Tuesday 18th June: Refugee Week Event, HG Wells, Woking, 6pm

Sunday 4th August : Last Post Multi-Faith Service, Brookwood Cemetery, 2 pm

Saturday 21st September: International Day of Peace, Mercia Walk, Woking, 12pm

More information E: administrator@wpof.org.uk



Woking People of Faith

Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum Events 2019

Can female leadership be a force for change and renewal in religion?

An event to mark UN Interfaith Harmony Week

Thursday 7th February 7.00 pm at St Nicholas Church, Bury St, Guildford GU2 4AW

4 female speakers: Unitarian, Christian Science, Muslim and Hindu

Interfaith Service to mark Interfaith Week

Sunday 17th November, 3 pm—5pm,

St Nicholas Church, Bury St, Guildford GU2 4AW

For more information please contact: Bernard Jones (Secretary)

T: 01483 424257 E: bernard.jones10@btinternet.com

Or Carolyn Neogi: E: carolynneogi@aol.com | T: 01483 415773



GGIFF

Self Employment Essentials

Tuesday 22nd January 2019, 2pm to 4pm

50 East street, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 1HQ

This is a half day workshop for those considering self employment and who want a taste session about what is involved. To book, please email: nichola@wworkstressolutions.org.uk

Work Stress Solutions relies on grants and donations to fund its courses. This course is free to people who meet their criteria for registration or available for a minimum donation of £5

'Malthus was Wrong: we can solve the problem of world population growth'

Speaker David Hepper

Tuesday, 12th February at 7.30pm

David is a computer scientist with a biology degree, working part-time for the British Dragonfly Society, maintaining their scientific records, and part-time for Population Matters, the charity and think-tank supported by those concerned about world population growth. In this talk he will show that population concerns fits well with Humanism but the threats from those wanting to bring on the Apocalypse or breed a Socialist utopia are equally clear. We now have the tools to steer world population to a sustainable future without frying the planet, thus avoiding the 'Malthusian Catastrophe'. But do we have the collective will to use them?

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

Tea/coffee and biscuits break at about 8.40 pm

There is no charge for the talks, but a small donation is requested to cover expenses (but not from students).

For further information, please phone David Simmonds (01483 800397)

or Mike Adams (01483 233324), or see our website

<http://guildfordwoking.humanist.org.uk>

We are also on Meetup, Facebook and Twitter.



Designing the right Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health service for Children and Young People across Surrey

Surrey County Council, in partnership with Surrey Clinical Commissioning Groups, is holding a series of events for families, children, young people and professionals to join an open and honest discussion about the future of emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people across Surrey.

The series of workshops will run between 14 and 22 January 2019 in locations across the county including Staines, Ewell, Caterham, Dorking, Woking, Godalming and Farnham.

These events will be tailored for different groups and will provide an opportunity to contribute to the way emotional wellbeing and mental health support and care is provided for children, young people, families and carers.

How to get involved

Anyone interested in attending one of the workshops being held from 14 January to 22 January 2019 can register interest via:

- Eventbrite - <http://surreywmh.eventbrite.com>
- SMS text - 07917 087 560
- Email - gwccg.info@nhs.net

Alternatively, details about the events are available on the following websites:

- NHS Guildford and Waverley CCG www.guildfordandwaverleyccg.nhs.uk/info.aspx?p=7
- Surrey County Council www.surreycc.gov.uk

Who cares?

You are invited to A Day Conference bringing together National and Local Government, Service Providers, Professionals, Volunteers, Churches and those who work in our community; informing, strengthening partnerships and improving local support for Carers.

Keynote speaker:

Caroline Dinanage MP Minister of State, Department of Health and Social Care

19 February 2019, 9.30 am - 4.00 pm, at Redhill and Reigate Golf Club, Pendleton Road, Redhill RH1 6LB

A buffet lunch will be provided

To reserve a place please email: racc190219@gmail.com

stating your name, organisation, position and any dietary requirements.

Diocese of Southwark
Croydon Episcopal Area



Skills workshop for young leaders

St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace is organising a skills workshop on 'Telling stories about spirituality and social change' for young adults (18-36 years old) who are engaged in some form of social action, and who are also rooted in a particular faith or spiritual commitment on 12th and 13th January 2019.

To apply, fill out the form at

<https://stethelburgas.org/event/skills-workshop-for-young-leaders-telling-stories-about-spirituality-and-social-change/>.

For more information, contact kishan.shah@stethelburgas.org.

FaithAction

**We want to know what faith groups are doing to tackle loneliness and social isolation
AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

Click here to [Take this short Questionnaire](#)

You've probably heard the statistic. Social isolation is as bad for us as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It has more of an impact on life expectancy than obesity. And many of us can probably identify with the complaint that we spend too much time looking at screens and not enough at real faces.

It seems like everyone at the moment is talking about loneliness. The Government recently brought out a [strategy](#) for tackling it. This contained a recognition of the "fantastic role" that faith groups play – and of course, we agree!

But what are faith groups actually doing? And what more could we do? This is what FaithAction wants to find out.

Perhaps your organisation runs a drop-in café, a lunch club, a parent and toddler group. Perhaps you provide hot meals for anyone who wants one. Perhaps you make sure people get visits at home if they wouldn't otherwise see people. Or perhaps you simply make sure that everyone who walks through the door receives a warm greeting and a listening ear, if that's what they want.

Whatever it is, we want to know about it. We want to highlight what faith is doing to tackle loneliness and social isolation in the UK, and share good ideas across communities. And we also want to work out what else places of worship and faith-based organisations could be doing to address this huge issue for our society.



Police offer Counter Terrorism training for staff and volunteers working at places of worship

Counter Terrorism Police are calling on places of worship to take part in an innovative new training

scheme that is proving a hit with major shopping and entertainment venues.

The package – free to use and developed in partnership with retail giant Marks & Spencer – aims to equip workers in crowded places with knowledge to help prevent terror attacks

Called ACT Awareness e-Learning, the training covers how to spot the signs of suspicious behaviour and what to do if a major incident should take place. Free to use, the package can be divided into short sections to suit business or service needs. However, it takes just three quarters of an hour to complete – 45 vital minutes that could save lives

Last year 36 people were killed and many more were injured in five separate incidents in London and Manchester. One of the attacks involved a group of worshippers outside a mosque. One man lost his life and many others were injured.

Police are now asking leaders of all faith institutions – especially those who host large congregations – to encourage staff and volunteers to take part.

For more information, or to apply for registration:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office>

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TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES
Communities Engagement