



Surrey Faith Links Newsletter

July 2021

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**"Where there is no peace, nothing flourishes."
—The Talmud**

Climate change is of huge concern for all, regardless of faith, culture or background. People are uniting to take steps to tackle the crisis, some of which you can read about in this newsletter. Resources for faith communities will be available soon on the Surrey Faith Links website to help us all do our part. It is International Day of Peace on the 21st of September, who will you make peace with?

Kawther Hashmi
Faith Links Adviser
E: KawtherH@smef.org.uk
W: www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk

Guildford Interfaith Walk

Our theme was 'Water'. Ten people were present, meeting at the statue of Alice and the White Rabbit. Less than in previous years and with a shorter programme but most enjoyable to be together again exactly a year after last summer's riverside Picnic during the brief lifting of restrictions, where we had said Farewell to Father Andrew on his retirement.



Trevor Jones led the walk in good weather and on the way he pointed out landmarks of interest. We walked upstream along Millmead, crossed the river at Millmead Lock as the towpath is temporarily closed, past the Weyside Inn. There we left the road and joined the towpath on the right bank of the River Wey, following it upstream to St. Catherine's Bridge and stopping to greet occupants of colourful houseboats. There were also a lot of rowing teams, kayaks and a few water-boarders on the river.

While we were on the towpath and St. Catherine's Bridge we stopped several times for members of the party to read extracts from their Scriptures on the theme of "Water". Bibhas Neogi read a translation of a Hindu paper about the use of water in various ceremonies, Carolyn Neogi read some verses of Abdu'l-Bahá in Bahá'í World Faith calling on us to "Be ye a sprinkling of rain to every meadow and a water of life to every tree." which also referred to the Koran and

Main Faith Festivals in August 2021

- 6: Transfiguration (Christian)
- 6-15: Fravardigan (Zoroastrian)
- 10: Islamic New Year (Muslim)
- 15: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian)
- 16: Navroze (Zoroastrian)
- 19: Ashura (Muslim)
- 21: Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)
- 21/22: Raksha Bandhan (Hindu)
- 29/30: Krishna Jayanti (Hindu)

For a description of the festivals please visit: [Religious Festivals](#)

the Gospel. Ray Wicksman told us of a song “Mayim, Mayim” written in the 1930’s and based on Isaiah 12:3 “Joyfully shall you draw upon the fountain of deliverance.” He sang a little of it in Hebrew. Bernard Jones read from the Bible and writings by Mary Baker Eddy chiefly about the river, the channel of thought, which pours from the city of God as described in Ezekiel chapter 27...

After stopping for a while on the bridge which replaced the old ferry some of us remembered, watching some people swimming in the water at the bottom of the sandy hill and the passing river traffic, we ambled back towards Guildford along the towpath on the left bank, past the natural spring which feeds a very short tributary to the river. Here Meeta Joshi read from a modern-day interpretation & explanation of Hindu Scripture from the little stone bridge there. We couldn’t follow this path all the way back because the bridge at a weir on the river is being repaired. So we climbed the steps by the Freemasons’ Hall and strolled along Flower Walk, seeing St. Nicolas’ Rectory and other buildings of interest, to Bury Fields and down Porridge Pot Alley back to Millmead. There several members of the party went to the popular Britannia Inn for refreshment. This all was a gentle walk of about 2 Km.

We hope that next year’s walk will be more varied and have more participants but were grateful for the opportunity to spend some time outdoors with a few of our local interfaith community

What do you think about active travel in Surrey...

The University of Surrey and the Surrey Climate Commission are working together on a project to understand what stops or encourages people to walk and cycle in Surrey. By understanding this we hope to influence changes that can support more active travel in the future.

Please help us by sharing your views in our online survey. It should take around 10 minutes, and it is completely confidential and anonymous. Of course, you have the right to withdraw from the survey at any point.

Please follow this link to access the survey:

https://surreyfaqs.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3D8Ota4zmllqse

There is the chance to win either a £50, £30, or £20 Amazon voucher through the prize draw, just enter your email address at the end of the survey.

If you have any questions about the project or the survey, please email Ben McCallan:

b.gatersleben@surrey.ac.uk or Cat Reeby: c.reeby@surrey.ac.uk.

Parliament in Your Parish

CAFOD are inviting Catholics to organise a virtual meeting with their local MP.

The [Parliament in Your Parish initiative](#) encourages MPs and parish constituents to discuss how to rebuild from the pandemic in a way that tackles the major global issues of our time, including climate change and unjust foreign debts.

Arundel & Brighton holds the record for the greatest number of MP meetings in England & Wales so far! Our Diocese has undertaken meetings with ten MPs to date, with a further two meetings booked and four more being planned.

CAFOD hope to reach out to more MPs - if they can find people to organise the meetings. Can you help? Visit the [diocesan website](#) to find out more.



Surrey Launches New Greener Transport Plan

Earlier this month, [Surrey County Council](#) launched a three month consultation on [Surrey's new Transport Plan](#) which includes plans to reduce the 46% of carbon emissions currently generated by transport.

Proposals include increasing walking and cycling routes to encourage people out of their cars, providing more charging points and parking for electric vehicles, more bus services, charging for transport use and introducing car clubs, as well as improving internet connections for home-working and redesigning neighbourhoods that enable easier access to local services, lessening the need to travel by car.

The consultation survey is available on [Commonplace](#) until 24 October 2021

Eco Church

Eco Church is A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. Their vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully.



Join the Eco Church Community

[Register to join](#) the Eco Church Community. Once you've signed up as an individual you can then register your church or, if your church is already registered, join your church team.

For more information, please visit: <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

Creation Care

The Creation Care scheme aims to encourage households to make changes to care for God's earth.

Wherever households are on their creation care journey, we want to provide ideas for their next steps, and recognise the progress they've made. [Find out more](#) about the scheme, or [sign up here](#).

The scheme covers 7 areas of household life:

Worship and prayer, Home, Garden, Travel, Food, Possessions, Community and global engagement

You can enter the scheme by completing a questionnaire that covers each of these areas. This will tell you how well your household is doing at each of these aspects of caring for creation, and hopefully give you ideas of ways you can improve.



Creation Care
Encouraging households
to care for God's world

Take the JUMP

"Take the JUMP" to save our planet and live with joy. For at least one month, try six shifts in how you eat, travel, shop and how to change the system.

The JUMP is backed by [leading science](#), which tells us that the millions of people living in relative comfort must make the six shifts if we're going to save the planet. This grassroots movement offers the community and the tools to help along the way. For more information please visit <https://takethejump.org/>



Where the government has got to, with 100 days to COP26

Last week was the end of the parliamentary term and the start of summer recess. It also marked 100 days to COP26, in Glasgow. It will come around faster than you think. So where have we got to in the UK on climate leadership and what more is there to do?



The first thing to say is that the climate summit and the UK's domestic action on climate are not the same thing, which numerous people in government have been at pains to stress.

[Read full article here](#)

Wild Challenge

Wild Challenge is a call - to get up, get out and get wild!

It's a challenge for you to connect with the natural world in brave new ways - to reach out and touch it and meet it head-on, up-close and personal.

All you need to do is create an account and an online profile, and within a few quick and easy steps you'll be ready to get stuck in to your wild adventure!

You can go as quickly or slowly as you like and we have a wide range of activities to suit your needs and location. There's something to do throughout the year, no matter what the weather brings!

Selected other RSPB activities, such as [Big Garden Birdwatch](#) count towards your achievements too!

Wild Challenge replaces the Wildlife Action Awards – an awards scheme for schools and families which we've been running since 1988. Thousands of children have taken part over the years and Wild Challenge's shiny new content and online presence ensures that many more children can get wild and closer to the nature on their doorstep.

If you would like to focus on wildlife gardening and helping nature thrive in your outdoor spaces, check out our [Giving Nature a Home](#) pages where you can create a personal plan with six simple activities to help you give nature a home where you live.

For more information please visit the [RSPB website here](#)

UpRising - Stand Out Programme available for young people

[UpRising](#) is running Stand Out, a free one-month online curriculum with up to twelve months of mentoring from a trained mentor to help young people age 18-25 stand out in a competitive job market. It is a collection of carefully curated online sessions all available to re-watch at any time. From online socials to meeting with employers to resilience workshops, it has a wide range of resources to help young people find a job, develop skills and make new friends.

For further details, please visit [UpRising](#).

COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government circulated a copy of the latest Stakeholder Toolkit for England; for the updated guidance for places of worship in England please [click here](#).

Bereavement Support Group launches

The Brigitte Trust will be running free structured eight-week bereavement courses run by a professional facilitator for anyone in Surrey in need of bereavement support.

The course will be limited to a maximum of 12 people and will be run in different parts of Surrey according to need. The first course will be held on a Monday morning from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm and will be based in Dorking starting in July.

The next course is likely to be in the West of Surrey in September. There will be refreshments along with parking and disabled access to toilets.

For more information or to book a place, please contact Sarah Pattenden:

Email: sarah.pattenden@brigitte-trust.com

Telephone: 07469 932192



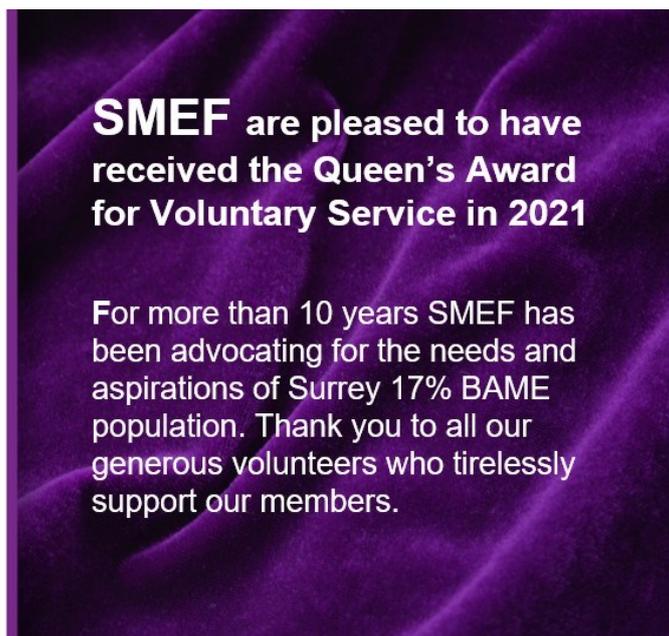
SMEF Awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service

Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum was awarded The Queens Award for Voluntary Service – The MBE for Volunteer Groups. Receiving The Queens Award for Voluntary Service has sent all at SMEF into a dizzy spell of excitement and celebration. As a membership organisation the award is a result of the efforts of our member groups, who have worked tirelessly to benefit BAME communities in Surrey. The Award is a recognition of their dedication and commitment to address some intractable problems in society with scarce resource, providing some relief to some of those most in need. BAME communities have been the most affected by the pandemic and we are very slowly emerging from those rough seas. It is only through the support from grassroots organisation that communities have been able to cope with the pandemic. The Lloyds Bank Foundation produced a report into the distinctive contribution, value, and experiences of small and medium charities



SMEF are pleased to have received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2021

For more than 10 years SMEF has been advocating for the needs and aspirations of Surrey 17% BAME population. Thank you to all our generous volunteers who tirelessly support our members.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Surrey Crisis Fund

Funding has been provided to the [Surrey Crisis Fund](#) which can help Surrey residents in emergency need. Depending on your circumstances which will be considered when you apply you could be eligible for some of the following support: - food and toiletries - essential white goods and furniture; please note we do not provide replacement items - certain utilities - emergency travel costs (hospital appointments, job interviews, etc). Other financial support available in Surrey: surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirusfinance or call 0300 200 1008 Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm. SMS 0786 0053 465 for Deaf and hearing impaired residents only (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)

COVID-19 funding

The Charities Aid Foundation has collated a list of organisations which are supporting charities and voluntary groups at this time. [Click here to read the list](#)

Supermarket Voucher Hardship Scheme

The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton has obtained a grant from the Albert Gubay Foundation to provide free supermarket food vouchers for people in need. The scheme has helped over 2,500 families so far, though there are still vouchers for Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Morrison's available for our parishes and schools to distribute to those in need.

If your parish or school has already applied for vouchers you can still apply for more - please contact our [Fundraising Officer](#) to request these. To find out more about the scheme, [visit our website](#).

Breathing Space

The new Government scheme "Breathing Space" gives you temporary protection from most types of debt collection, while you work with a debt adviser to take action to get on top of your finances. You can be protected from creditors for 60 days, with most interest and penalty charges frozen and enforcement action halted. Certain types of payments including ongoing housing costs, utility bills and taxes will still need to be paid during this time. To find out more about other possible options and others provided by District and Borough councils please visit Financial help - [Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](http://surreycc.gov.uk)

Listed Places of Worship grant scheme

The Listed Places of Worship (LPW) Grant Scheme gives grants that cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. The scheme covers repairs to the fabric of the building, along with associated professional fees, plus repairs to turret clocks, pews, bells and pipe organs. The Grant Scheme is run by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and administered by Topmark.

For more information please visit: <http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum AGM

My Hinduism: Differences among Hindu

EMF have been organizing a series of events looking at variations among different faiths. Earlier in the year there have been two events looking at Buddhism and Sikhism. This will be the third such event in the year.

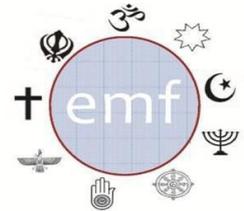
Tuesday 21st September, 7.30 pm on zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/93072296287?pwd=MmFMZzVvdGdBRTlJWmNGVDI1eHVSQT09>

Meeting ID: 930 7229 6287

Passcode: 070531

For Zoom access please email KawtherH@smef.org.uk



Woking People of Faith Events 2021

International Peace Day - This year's theme is 'Climate Action for Peace'. We have asked children to produce a poster or poem in answer to the question: 'What is causing climate change and what can people of faith do to help solve it?'

We would normally hold an event to mark the occasion and invite the Mayor of Woking to give prizes to the winners at Woking Town Centre, along with other activities. However, this year, we are having to do things differently and are working with RHS Wisley Gardens to mark the event on Zoom on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 6.30 pm till 7.15 pm. Winners of the competition will be announced and a short talk from RHS Wisley Gardens. All welcome to join on zoom.

Interfaith Cricket Tournament - September TBC

Interfaith Week Event - November TBC

For more information please visit: www.wpof.org.uk or email: administrator@wpof.org.uk



Woking People of Faith

Westminster Abbey: Lost medieval sacristy opened to public

A recently-discovered medieval sacristy used by Westminster Abbey's 13th-century Benedictine monks has been open to the public for the first time, as part of a Summer Festival of events taking place at the Abbey from July to September

The Head of Visitor Experience, Scott Craddock said: "We've lined up our best ever season of things to see and do at the Abbey - we hope we've got something for everyone to enjoy whether you're into history, music, film or theatre, or looking for a family day out."

For more information and to book tickets see: www.westminster-abbey.org/visit-us/summer-festival

Inter Faith Week 14-21 November

The aims of Inter Faith Week are to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels;
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society; and
- Increase understanding between different people of religious and non-religious beliefs



This year [Inter Faith Week](#) takes place from Sunday 14 to Sunday 21 November. It's a Week for everyone – young and old and of different faiths and beliefs, including non-religious beliefs. Activities benefit those who take part; they also send a strong message that good inter faith relations matter and that there is appreciation of people's faiths and beliefs and how those inspire them to contribute to the community and live well together.

The Week is timed to begin each year on Remembrance Sunday to enable people of different backgrounds to [remember together](#) the service of soldiers and civilians of all faiths and beliefs and to reflect on peace. Lots of ideas for Inter Faith Week activity can be found at <https://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/ideas>

Follow the Week at @ifweek on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The Week's hashtag is #InterFaithWeek. For further information, contact the Inter Faith Week team at interfaithweek@interfaith.org.uk.

Guildford & Godalming Interfaith Forum Events

Annual Interfaith Week multi-faith event at St. Nicolas Community Centre, Bury Street, Guildford.

Sunday 21st November at 3.00p.m.

Details from Carolyn Neogi : gg_interfaith_friends@aol.com tel. 01483 415773

New members are welcome at our bi-monthly meetings

Details : bernard.jones10@btinternet.com. tel. 01483 424257



SMEF Reflection and Devotional Meetings

Since the beginning of the Pandemic SMEF's Bahá'í Trustee, Hayet Shahrezaey, has hosted weekly SMEF Reflection and Devotional meetings for all SMEF member groups, meeting every Wednesday at 11.00a.m. on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82043959919?pwd=dE8zZE90ZUtoTXFocGtKbFFxTjQ1QT09>

Meeting ID: 820 4395 9919 | Passcode: 686479

For more information please contact: hayetaskri@hotmail.com

Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum

Physical Activities

Our free Zoom children kick boxing classes continue with a full house every Tuesday!
No experience required.

We are collaborating with London Tennis Association to facilitate a 12-week activity programme for children aged 8-18years.

Please email sabar@smef.org.uk or call 07735921298 if you wish to book your child/children or are interested in any of our physical activities.



Please look out for information about our 'Walk and Talk in the park' in August in Surrey Heath. We will provide free light, healthy refreshments for the participants. We will maintain social distancing and comply with the SMEF guidelines.

We have provided funding to several of our member groups to establish physical activity sessions for their communities. We can help you find venues and supply accredited instructors. If you are interested, please email sabar@smef.org.uk

GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

A NATIONAL WEEK OF EVENTS CELEBRATING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Great Big Green Week will take place 18 – 26 September 2021, and will be the largest event for climate and nature ever seen in the UK. Thousands of events will celebrate how communities are taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces, and encourage others to get involved too

Events will range from art installations, to concerts to community stalls, to climate cafes, and everything in between; hosted by teachers, bus drivers, sport clubs, artists, community groups, places of worship, builders and anyone who cares about climate change.

You can [find out more here](#).



Surrey Family Learning offer FREE online courses for parents, grandparents and carers who live in Surrey. New courses have been released for summer term. [Supporting Parents](#)

Anti Slavery Talk by 'Hope for Justice'

Saturday 23 October 2021. The talk will last for 45-50 minutes followed by at least 15 minutes discussion so it would be a different format.

For zoom joining details, please contact Keith Scott: keithsc_2000@yahoo.com or 01483 824980

For more information please visit: www.wokingdebates.com and/or follow on Facebook



Scam Awareness Online Sessions

Join one of Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards FREE online sessions this August, to learn how you can protect yourself and others against scams!

Friends Against Scams – 3rd August 2021, 10:30 – 12:00

Businesses Against Scams – 5th August 2021, 10:30 – 12:00

Scam Champion session - 11th August 2021, 10:30 – 12:30

[Click the Eventbrite link](#) to book your place or find out more about the session/future dates:

All sessions hosted via MS Teams.

Surrey County Council's public health team offers the following training:

[COVID-19 related training](#)—Virtual Adult Introductory Mental Health First Aid Course

[Suicide prevention](#) to help improve understanding and confidence to intervene with people at risk of suicide.

[Wellbeing workshops](#) promote positive, emotional and mental wellbeing through six everyday actions

[Connect 5](#) – Ways to work with Mental Wellbeing in everyday practise. This course will enable people to have conversations about mental health and offer information on local service. Connect 5 is aimed at everyone.

[SafeTALK](#) - half-day alertness training that prepares anyone 15 or older, regardless of prior experience or training, to become suicide-alert.

[Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training \(ASIST\)](#) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid.

[Other training and useful resources](#) - including online training and training provided by other organisations.

Live Streaming of Religious Services:

A Church Near you: https://www.achurchnearyou.com/live-stream/?tags=Live_stream

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton: <https://www.dabnet.org/>

Surrey Muslim Association: <http://www.surreymuslims.org/Resources/>

Join Wat Phra Dhammakaya Buddhist Temple in daily meditation: <https://www.facebook.com/DMCtvLondon/>

Surrey Faith Links, Surrey Ethnic Minority Forum

Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Guildford GU4 7HL

E: KawtherH@smef.org.uk

W: www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk

