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Main Faith Festivals in February 2021

- 8: Parinirvana (Buddhist)
- 12-13: Losar (Buddhist)
- 16: Shrove Tuesday
- 16/17: Sarasvati Puja (Hindu)
- 17: Ash Wednesday (Christian)
- 17—1 April: Lent (Christian)
- 26: Purim (Jewish)
- 26: Magha Puja (Buddhist)

For a description of the festivals please visit: [Religious Festivals](https://www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk/religious-festivals)

“Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship”
(Guatama Buddha)

Happy New Year! Although we are facing another lockdown, the work of faith communities continues as usual. Plenty of virtual interfaith events to keep us busy and some very important Covid-19 information particularly around the vaccines. Happy reading!

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Are we giving vulnerable children the help they need?

On Saturday 16 June 49 people attended the 47th Woking Debate on Zoom considering Are we giving vulnerable children the help they need?

Sian Jones, the Early Help Project Lead and Programme Manager (North) for Surrey Care Trust opened the debate with a description of the services locally. Early intervention is important for children to develop fully their relationships and confidence to overcome neglect and abuse. Financial challenges are a problem. When children feel safe they can build trust but are we doing this?

David Munro, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey gave the answer yes and no to the question but ultimately no. There are about 20,000 children in Woking and they have a spectrum of needs. Surrey has low custodial records for young people as the County tries very hard to keep young people from getting a criminal record. By the time young people come to the attention of the police it is

often too late to really help them and some seem impossible to help.

Justin Price is the head of Freemantles School which is dedicated to children with autism where they aim to teach the children how to understand social interaction. Many people with autism do end up in prison which is an easier place to be as they are told what to do. Children with autism are easily led as they have no filter. There are far too many children with special needs than places in special schools. Justin emphasised the importance of the children's centres that have now mostly closed and were doing such an important job. Sian reminded us that we still have the young careers groups but it is the under 11s that are missing out.

In response to a question on whether the curriculum is too exam orientated Justin thought this was definitely true. At their school they concentrate on essential support and working out what happiness would be like for each individual. Life skills are so important. He gave an example of a high functioning autistic young man who got a place at university but who never washed or changed his clothes and quickly became very isolated. Emotional well being leads to resilience and then children can learn academically for exams.

The referral system for children is too slow it was agreed. Many of the referrals to CAMS are to the wrong service. At present children referred with autism can end up with a fortnightly appointment which is not enough to build trust into the relationship.

In conclusion all three speakers talked about the need for early intervention, more resources and the important role of volunteers. For information about future debates please visit: www.wokingdebates.com

SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27 January. Its theme in 2021 is 'Be the Light in the Darkness'. Holocaust Memorial Day is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. It honours the survivors of these regimes and challenges everyone to use the lessons of their experience to inform their lives today. www.hmd.org.uk/

World Interfaith Harmony Week takes place from 1 to 7 February. It is a UN recognised Week which was proposed to the UN General Assembly by HM King Abdullah of Jordan. The first UN World Interfaith Harmony Week took place in February 2011. <http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com>

Sadaqa Day will take place on Sunday 21 March. It is an annual day of faith-based social action led by the Muslim community. mysadaqaday.org

The Big Lunch is held in the first weekend of June. Across the years millions of people from different faith backgrounds have joined together to take part through street parties, BBQs, iftars and picnics.

<https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-lunch-faqs>

Refugee Week will take place from 14-20 June. Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities. The theme for the 2021 Week is 'We cannot walk alone'.

<https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

Holocaust Memorial Day 2021 resource available

The council of Christian and Jews HMD resource is now available, featuring prayers, activities, scripture readings, a poem, and a testimony. Please click here to view the resource.

Alternatively you can contact Robert Wadsworth on cjrelations@ccj.org.uk for a copy of the PDF and to request a hard copy.

If you are holding an event, don't forget to register it at

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/activities-form/>.



Virtual Tour of Places of Worship

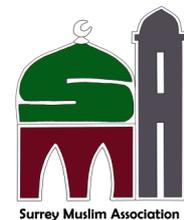
The Council of Christian and Jews Student Leaders at the University of Oxford have created a Virtual Tour of places of worship. This tour invites you to see inside religious buildings around the country and discover some of the religious artefacts inside. Thanks to Lincoln Central Mosque and Cultural Centre, Wilpshire Methodist Church, Oxford Jewish Congregation, BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, and Manchester Gurdwara, for virtually opening their doors to us.

[Watch the tour by clicking here](#)

Surrey Muslim Association statement on Covid-19 Vaccinations

Imam's from Surrey have issued a statement about the Covid-19 Vaccinations, their permissibility and recommendation from both medical and religious experts.

The statement can be [accessed here](#)



Other faith leaders and faith organisations have issued similar statements, which can be found here:

<https://www.faithaction.net/campaigns/faith-covid-response/information/>

And

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/covid-19-and-vaccination>

FAQ's can be found on the Surrey Heartlands website , [click here](#)

COVID-19 advice in different languages

Big Leaf Foundation have produced recent COVID tier rules in languages representative of displaced communities. They are available to download at: <https://www.bigleafoundation.org.uk/covid-19-advice.html>

They have also produced videos about fake news in different languages which can [be found here](#)

“Make inside feel better” campaign launched

Part of the [Every Mind Matters](#) NHS campaign, “Make inside feel better” focuses on helping people manage their mental wellbeing during the lockdown period. It includes getting a [“Your mind plan”](#) by answering five questions, as well as a coronavirus and wellbeing section which gives tips and ideas on various subjects including [dealing with change](#) and coping with [money worries and job uncertainty](#).

Help immediately after a COVID-19 death or any sudden/too-soon death

[Sudden](#) is a free service for bereaved people from day one of bereavement and for the first ten weeks and their provision includes: emotional support by email or telephone from a trained, named worker; safeguarding and assessment of a bereaved person’s health; safety and any acute needs; help, advocacy and referrals to meet their care needs as well as “active monitoring” of mental health.

The service can be contacted on telephone 0800 2600 400.

<https://sudden.org/>

Mobile phone providers to increase data allowance to support disadvantaged children

The Department for Education is working with mobile phone providers to provide additional mobile data to children, young people or families who meet the following criteria:

- They don’t have access to a fixed broadband connection
- They cannot afford the additional data needed to access educational resources or social care services
- They have access to a mobile device that uses a participating network
- They are facing disruption to their face-to-face education, or have been advised not to attend school.
- Further information can be found on [here](#)

Pharmacies launch codeword scheme to offer ‘lifeline’ to domestic abuse victims

The [Ask for ANI](#) scheme allows those at risk or suffering from abuse to discreetly signal that they need help and access support. By asking for ANI, a trained pharmacy worker will offer a private space where they can understand if the victim needs to speak to the police or would like help to access support services such as a national or local domestic abuse helplines.

The scheme is initially available through the 2,300 Boots stores as well as 255 independent pharmacies.

FaithAction have put together some tips for faith-based organisations to support their members with mental health during the pandemic .

[Click here to read them](#)



Day Opportunities Survey

Surrey County Council would like to understand more about what activities, groups and services people aged 60 years and over, who live or work in Surrey, care about the most or would like to make use of. These will be activities, groups and services that support people to work, contribute to their community and meet and socialise with others. SCC are particularly interested in what helps residents to stay healthy and active, feel safe, reduce loneliness and improves general wellbeing. If you are 60 years of age or over, SCC would like to hear your views.

The online survey is available here:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/adult-social-care-and-public-health/surrey-day-opportunities-2020/>

For additional information on the survey, please use the following contact details:

Email: kathryn.telford@surreycc.gov.uk | Telephone: 07815 116611

Locked down doesn't mean locked out

With a new National Lockdown announced on 4 January, Surrey County Council want to assure all residents that there is help and support available should you be struggling in any way.

Guidance about what the National Lockdown means for you can be found on the [GOV.UK National Lockdown Stay at Home website](#).

There is also guidance on SCC's dedicated [Coronavirus web pages](#).

It's OK to not be OK

2020 has been a tough year for everyone and with lockdown can often come loneliness so if you or someone you know is struggling mentally then [visit adult mental health and wellbeing on Healthy Surrey](#) where you'll find tips on mental wellbeing and information on how to access specialist support locally.

You can also get help from by visiting [Mind.org.uk](#) or call 0300 123 3393 Text: 86463

If you, or someone you know is in crisis visiting [Samaritans.org.uk](#) or call them on 116 123

Young people who are feeling particularly anxious or depressed can visiting [Kooth.com](#)

SAFE Webinar Programme:

SAFE is an initiative by CST that aims to improve the security of the UK's faith and minority communities.

The threat of terrorism is all too real in today's world. SAFE takes CST's many years of experience protecting British Jews and puts it to the benefit of all British faith and minority communities. Everyone has the right to lead their lives in safety and security.

Any community that feels vulnerable to violent extremism and hate crime is eligible to receive advice from SAFE. [Click here](#) for more information about the SAFE Webinar Programme: a series of 9 free one-hour security webinars delivered by CST.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Surrey Crisis Fund

The [Surrey Crisis Fund](#) is a discretionary fund run by Surrey County Council. It offers financial help to Surrey residents who have nowhere else to turn in an emergency or following a disaster.

What would you do with a £100m in Surrey?

[Surrey County Council's 'Your Fund Surrey'](#) has launched £100 m for local communities. Visit their website for details and the interactive map showing what is going on in your community.

Community Foundation for Surrey Donor Funds

Funding to support groups addressing the Community Foundation Priority areas:

- Health & Wellbeing – Advance people’s physical and mental health, wellbeing and safety
- Education & Skills – Improve life skills, education, employability and enterprise
- Disadvantage & Exclusion – Promote reduction of isolation and disadvantage and access to local services
- Stronger Communities – Maximise ability to strengthen community cohesion and build social capacity

CFS are currently accepting applications on a rolling basis with the next awards made in January 2021.

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

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](#)

FCC Community Action Fund

The FCC Communities Foundation is offering grants between £2,000 and £100,000 for projects which involve the provision, maintenance or improvement of public amenities including community spaces in places of worship, which are registered charities. Projects must be based within 10 miles of an eligible FCC Environment waste facility.

The current round closes on 3 March. For more information please [click here](#)

New Black and Ethnic Minority community-led foundation

Baobab Foundation will be “a new type of foundation, led by the communities it serves”, and aim to address the chronic underfunding of community organisations led by people of colour.

For more information please [click here](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Together for Uyghurs – a Holocaust memorial event

Monday 25 January, 6.30pm

Free online event, book your place via Eventbrite:

<https://together-for-uyghurs-holocaust-memorial.eventbrite.co.uk>

As we approach Holocaust Memorial Day, prominent leaders and thinkers share how their beliefs inspire them to action for the Uyghur people.

The aim of this event is to inspire people of all faiths and none to advocate on behalf of the Uyghurs, and to encourage action and prayer within their respective communities.

Speakers

The Rt Hon and Rt Rev Lord Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism

Ziba Murat, daughter of retired Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas who was recently sentenced to 20 years in prison because of her family members' activism in the US

Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of Humanists UK and President of Humanists International

Sonam T Frasi, FCA, RAS, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Northern Europe, Poland and the Baltic States

This event is jointly hosted by two organisations: [René Cassin](#), the Jewish voice for human rights, and [CSW](#) a Christian human rights organisation specialising in freedom of religion or belief

Woking People of Faith Events 2021

The Early Years of Woking People of Faith - Monday 1st February, 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Hear about the beginnings of WPoF from some of the founding members: Richard Cook, Jonny Blair, Dr Syed Naqvi, Philip Goldenberg, Ilyas Raja and Pippa Ross-McCabe. Concludes with a Q&A session.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85108724936?pwd=OXI4dmlKS3NtakNieUZSM0s2UGtTdz09>

Meeting ID: 851 0872 4936 | Passcode: 327239

Ladies' Coffee Morning - Saturday 30th January, 11.00am - 11.40am

This month we've decided to have a topic, so come and meet ladies of different faiths to talk about what you've been doing during lockdown. The challenge is you'll only have two minutes to tell us what that is! Make a cuppa and invite a friend. Zoom link:

Meeting ID: 927 3187 0372 | Passcode: V6u4Wd

Virtual Cooking Show - Tuesday 16th February

Virtual Tour of Shah Jahan Mosque - Monday 8th March, 7.00 pm

Interfaith Football Tournament - Saturday 22nd May

Refugee Week Event - June, tbc

International Peace Day - Saturday 18th September

Interfaith Cricket Tournament - September, tbc

Interfaith Week Event - November, tbc



Woking People of Faith

Woking Debates 2021 Programme

11.00 am—12.30 pm on Zoom

20th February—Woking in 2050: Dream or Nightmare?

20th March—Is knife crime and gang culture a growing problem in Woking? What is being done?

17th April—What value is arms and military expenditure to the UK?

15th May—Air Pollution: the hidden threat in Woking?



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

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum invite you to:

My Buddhism—“A guide to differences amongst Chinese, Thai, Tibetan and Zen Buddhist practices

Tuesday 2nd February 2021

Please join at 9.45 am for 10.00 am start till 12.00 pm on Zoom

Speakers:

Chung Lo—Principal Features of Chinese Buddhism and personal account as a Monk

Wayne Lee— pupil of a Tibetan Lama

Martin Goodson—Shobo-an Zen Centre

Phramaha Bhatsakorn Piyobhaso—Karma and the associated gold-roofed Wats (temples)

For zoom details and a copy of ‘Insights Into Faith – Volume 1’ Please contact Geoffrey Morris: geofmo1932@gmail.com

www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk



I Speak Music London launch events

I Speak Music is a programme using music to promote learning, empathy and cultural tolerance between people newly arrived in the UK and local communities. I Speak Music is run by Surrey Arts

Session 1 – Displacement and empathy

Session 2 – Multi-agency working for collective impact

Session 3 – Practice-sharing for music facilitators

For more information please visit:

<https://www.sound-connections.org.uk/events/i-speak-music-london-launch-events>



Essential ONLINE Certified training for Faith Centres



Basic Safeguarding for Faith Centres

How to safeguard children within your faith institution and how to protect them from harm

Saturday, Jan 30, 11am | Click [HERE](#) to register

Health & Safety Awareness for Faith Institutions and Supplementary Education Centres

Everyone in a faith organisations needs to be aware of the basics of health & safety to keep everyone as safe as possible. Sun 7th Feb, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm. (Free for SFI members. £20 per head non-members)

Click [HERE](#) to register

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Learn about the duties of a DSL, safeguarding risk assessment and actions for overcoming safeguarding challenges at personal, organisational and community levels. Saturday 20 Feb , 5pm – 8:30 pm

(£10 per head for SFI members; £50 per head non-members) | Click [HERE](#) to register

Time to Talk Day, 4 February 2021

Time to talk day is held every first Thursday of February, it is a national campaign that encourage people to talk about mental health. This year Time to Talk day theme is the **power of small**, a small conversation about mental health has the power to make big difference.



We know that the more conversations we have, the more myths we can bust and barriers we can break down, helping to end the isolation, shame and worthlessness that too many of us with mental health problems are made to feel.

For more information please visit: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/time-talk-day>

Free Online Learning

How to teach online, free course: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/teach-online>

National Emergency Library: <https://archive.org/details/nationalemergencylibrary>

Free online courses from top Universities: <https://www.classcentral.com/>

Free learning from the Open University: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

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/>

HELPLINE FOR FAITH INSTITUTIONS

0333 772 1989

EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK, 1PM-7PM



Call our team of expert consultants for up-to-date support during this critical time.

**CALL US ON
0333 772 1989 OR SEND
US AN EMAIL AT
INFO@SFITOGETHER.ORG**

www.sfitogether.org

SFI | Strengthening
Faith Institutions

WE CAN HELP WITH:

- Local and National Government economic support schemes
- Charity Registration
- Gift Aid
- Legal matters
- counseling support
- Safeguarding children online
- Health and well-being
- Volunteer opportunities
- technical and financial support for online engagement

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