



"Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule"
(Buddha)

We are facing very challenging times not just with the coronavirus but also with the issues that have surfaced following the death of George Floyd, # Black Lives Matter and soon again, the Brexit challenges.

It is a time for people of all faiths, beliefs or no faith to unite in the fight against hatred with mercy and love.

This newsletter contains so much of the good work and partnerships between Local Authorities, voluntary organisations and faith communities. It also includes many opportunities and guidance.

Kawther Akhtar
 Faith Links Adviser
 E: Kauser.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk
 T: 07552 845688 | W: www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk

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Re-opening places of worship

On 7 June the UK Government announced that places of worship across England would be permitted to reopen for individual prayer from Monday 15 June. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-re-open-for-individual-prayer> The press release noted that: "Places of worship still have discretion over when they consider it safe to open and may decide to remain closed or reopen at a slower pace if they wish."

New guidance was published to ensure the limited re-opening of places of worship can be done safely and in line with social distancing guidelines: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic>

Information was subsequently updated to note that re-opening is allowed from Saturday 13 June. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus->

Main Faith Festivals in June 2020

7: Trinity Sunday (Christian)
 11: Corpus Christi (Christian)
 16: Martyrdom of Guru Arjan (Sikh)
 20: Midsummer Solstice (Pagan)
 21: World Humanist Day
 23: Ratha Yatra (Hindu)

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

[outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do](#)

Some faith community organisations have begun issuing guidelines for their communities on re-opening. <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/covid-19-recovery-and-phased-return>

Virtual Interfaith Prayer

Woking People of Faith held an Interfaith Prayer Meeting on Thursday 25th June 2020 at 2pm; it was the first in our experimental online virtual meetings on Zoom.



Leaders of different faith institutions in Woking came together to pray alongside each other according to their own ways and traditions. The theme for the prayers was COVID-19 and the repercussions of this virus.

Each leader in turn gave their thoughts and said prayers, which were followed by thirty seconds of silence for the participants to reflect and pray. The Leaders came from the Baha'i Faith, the Jewish Faith, Shia Muslims, Sunni Muslims, and Christian Denominations (Anglican,

Methodist, Roman Catholic and URC).

There were twelve participants in the meeting, which lasted about forty minutes; and although we were not in the same room, there was a sense of community. After the meeting had finished and the busy leaders had left, a small group remained to chat and discuss what life was like for them under lockdown. All in all, it was deemed to be a success.

Reported by Marian Nash, Secretary, Woking People of Faith



Places of Worship Covid-19 Compliance Officer Course Level 2

As places of worship, supplementary schools and out-of-school settings are due to open up soon, there are many guidelines and procedures at play that need to be put in place.

Navigating what needs to be done can be challenging to many, so SFI have brought in the expert tutors to help you through the process and create the safest environment for your congregation and guests.

The Level 2 Faith Institutions Covid-19 Compliance Officer Course is designed for Lead Worker Representatives, Managers and COVID-19 Compliance Officers who require the knowledge and skills to design and implement their Return to Work Plans including hygiene and respiratory arrangements, social distancing, close working, PPE and First Aid.

The course gives an overview of the Return to Work Safely Protocol guidance document issued by the Government. This sets out how to identify requirements, plan and implement processes and monitor adherence to the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and management of a suspected case.

For more information or to register please visit:

<https://www.sfitogether.org/2020/06/10/places-of-worship-covid-19-compliance-officer-course-level-2/>

#Black Lives Matter

Thousands have protested in the USA in the wake of the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on 25 May as well as in response to other deaths and acts of brutality and to racism today and across recent centuries. The UK has also seen a number of such protests

Responses from a number of Interfaith Network UK member bodies can be seen at:

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-member-responses-to-killing-of-george-floyd-subsequent-events-and-racial-injustice>.



Covid-19 Summary of published guidance and support for vulnerable groups

A round-up has been published of much of the guidance and support for vulnerable groups. It has masses of resources collated within one document, so whether you are looking for an 'easy read' guide to Covid-19, asthma guidance, or resources for sex workers, you'll probably [find it here](#)

Avoid water Shortage

It may have rained a lot recently but water companies are seeing a big increase in water usage at the moment with more of us being at home during the day and unseasonably warm weather. They are asking customers to try to reduce their water use to avoid a water shortage in the coming months.

[Tips on how to do save water \(and in some cases how to claim some freebies\) can be found here](#)

Welcome Buddies Is OPEN

Welcome Buddies is now open for new volunteer applications and referrals!

Run by Voluntary Action South West Surrey, Welcome Buddies is part of the Welcome Project. It aims to help people with mental ill-health move on with their lives by supporting them to join in with main stream activities.

People who would benefit are those who have either become isolated because they lack the confidence to start a new activity on their own or those who would like to move on from activities provided for people with mental ill-health and join groups, clubs, activities that are for everyone but who need support to get started.

Welcome Buddies helps identify activities that the person would like to try out, they are then matched with a volunteer buddy who will accompany them and support them until they are ready to go it alone.

Volunteers all receive training for the role and are DBS checked. For further details or to make a referral contact please contact;

Denise Graves on 01483 504626, or via mobile on 07825 417204.

Alternatively you can email: d.graves@vasws.org.uk

Please note - social distancing guidelines are strictly followed.

Two platforms to support collaboration

Surrey County Council is supporting two platforms to help people and organisations to connect and collaborate around their needs, particular causes or projects.

The first is the upgraded version of the [Social Value Market Place](#). This platform is designed to help connect businesses to the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS), encouraging and driving up the use of businesses' corporate social responsibility (CSR) and matching and connecting their CSR offers with requests from the voluntary sector.

The second is called [Goodsted](#). It's a platform the council wants to test and learn from as part of their approach to community collaboration. Goodsted is a 'digital collaboration tool' and can bring people or groups together around an interest or project. It can help you raise awareness of your project, crowdsource supporters and resources, keep your supporters updated and share messages with one or all of them at a time and help you build up a collaborative team to achieve your goal. The council wants to understand if a tool like this would drive real energy around needs, causes or projects.

The council will be launching a social media campaign aimed at business on the 8th July and so they would encourage charities/community groups to upload their projects/support needs onto the platforms by end of June, at the latest, so they are available during the campaign. These could be for something specific and tangible like needing paper/needing a room or for something broader like a project that you might need varied support with such as refurbishing or establishing a club for example.

New Surrey Wellbeing Facebook Page

A new initiative has been developed to help families in Surrey meet the emotional needs of their children during the current pandemic. This initiative has been created through a collaboration of NHS and voluntary sector experts on parenthood and family relationships.

The new Surrey Wellbeing Facebook page provides a safe and supportive space to help parents in Surrey weather the current Covid-19 storm. The page provides age related guidance for the various stages of development in children and tips and ideas on how to meet their emotional and developmental needs. Informative videos and information sheets make it easily accessible.

The page is available by searching Surrey Wellbeing Partnership on Facebook, or visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/Surrey-Wellbeing-Partnership-103386114667958>

Safe Havens launch virtual mental health crisis service

People who are facing a mental health crisis can now attend one of the five Safe Havens across Surrey.

Safe Havens are staffed by mental health nurses and mental health practitioners. They provide adults in crisis with expert advice and support in the evenings and at weekends. They are continuing to see people in person seven days a week from 6pm-11pm. But, in addition, they are also now offering a virtual service during the same hours. This means those who are self-isolating due to the Coronavirus or who are in a vulnerable group or shielding or anxious about travelling will now be able to access their local Safe Haven without leaving home. This will help to ensure people receive timely advice and support and avoid unnecessary visits outside of the home and also visits to A&E.

Each of the Safe Havens is providing the virtual service. To access these services, please visit

www.sabp.nhs.uk/safehaven and scroll down to 'Virtual Safe Havens' for links to your nearest virtual Safe Haven service.

Celebrating Florence Nightingale's Bicentenary

'All these Pearls...' - Florence Nightingale on Comparative Religion

Florence Nightingale's Bicentenary on the 12th May 2020 comes at a poignant time, especially in the light of the opening of Nightingale Hospitals to serve the coronavirus pandemic. Indeed, the World Health Organisation has declared 2020 'The Year of the Nurse and the Midwife' in honour of her Bicentenary. Florence Nightingale's work as a pioneering nurse in the Crimean war is well known. However, it is lesser known that she spent the second half of her life largely bedridden as an 'invalid', yet actively engaged in successful social reform and writing extensively on theology, philosophy, spirituality and comparative religion...

Florence Nightingale had an inclusive respect for all the major world faiths and, as Anne Peirce highlights, she believed that 'there are many manifestations of the same God known under different names...the Egyptian Gods Ptah and Atem, the Islamic God Allah, the Christian Lord God and the Jewish God Yahweh. Nightingale believed that God needed different names and representations in order to meet the needs of the people in different times and places'.

Florence Nightingale, who is considered a Mystic in her own right, believed that the Divine is within us all and only needs to be actualized and expressed in the world - viewing practical social action as a natural result of the mystical inner realisation of the 'Divine Within' through contemplation and prayer. As a favourite prayer, Florence quoted the last line of Plato's Phaedrus: 'Give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and inward man be as one'.

Florence Nightingale, who was declared a 'lesser saint' by the Episcopal/Anglican Church for her philanthropy and humanitarian work, despite some opposition to her theological views in her book 'Suggestions for Thought' being regarded by some as 'heretical', said herself that saints were 'not for the church but for God' and that they 'lived for God alone', saying that, 'you must go to the Mohametanism, Buddhism, to the East, to the Sufis and Fakirs, to Pantheism, for the right growth of mysticism' and that, 'To know God we must study Him as much in the Pagan and Jewish dispensations as in the Christian...this gives unity to the whole - one continuous thread of interest to all these pearls.'

Rev. Jenny Miller, Interfaith Minister



Rev. Jenny Miller's interfaith Essay jointly won the World Congress of Faiths essay Award 2019 on the subject of 'Is Interfaith Worship a desirable practice?' and is now available on: <https://www.sundarispireit.co.uk/>

Inter Faith Buddies

Our understanding of our own religious tradition may sometimes be enhanced by insights of other faiths. Diversity of belief, experience or language can provide an opportunity to learn.

Are you interested in making a connection with someone of a different faith by becoming a spiritual buddy?

The idea behind this is that perhaps once a month or once a week for say half an hour, two buddies from different faiths share their spiritual practice, insights or readings and reflect on this together between now and interfaith week which will take place from 8th November to Sunday 15th November, 2020.

The format of sharing and guidelines are to be decided by each pair of buddies. If you are interested please send your details to Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguuldford.org.uk.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Asda Foundation

The Asda Foundation supports small grass roots organisations in a number a way throughout the year. Working with Asda's Community Champions in store we are able to work with a range of organisations and groups on a range of projects. Please visit the website for more information:

<https://www.asdafoundation.org/foundation-grants>

See, Hear, Respond

Barnardos will be distributing £7m of Covid-19 funding from the government to children's charities. It will open for expressions of interest in "the coming weeks".

For more information, please visit: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond>

The Tree Council – Branching Out Fund

Schools and Community groups within the UK can apply for grants of between £300 and £1,500 to get communities and young people up to the age of 21 involved in tree and hedge planting and care during National Tree Week – 28 November to 6 December 2020. Applications will be considered as they are received and applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application within four weeks.

In addition, free tree packs are available for schools supported by the Tree Angel Orchards Fund. Schools can register to hear when applications open.

For details of both opportunities see: <https://treecouncil.org.uk/take-action/grants-for-trees/>

Covid-19 discretionary fund

A new Covid-19 discretionary fund is available for small/micro businesses available via local authorities, to cover buildings or property costs for organisations with fewer than 50 employees, including charity properties getting charitable business rates relief, which are not eligible for small business rates relief or rural rate relief:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-local-authority-discretionary-grants-fund?fbclid=IwAR0kCtcq7d20o4D3qHPQ0dVawOcvXqmPhb9GHpiNy8guGOwtdawgwstfBg4>

Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund

To help VCS organisations based in England continue to provide mental health services – or provide additional support – organisations can apply for a Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund (CMHRF) grant.

Thanks to £5m support from government (the Department of Health and Social Care), grants of £20,000 or £50,000 are available for projects lasting up to 12 months.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.faithaction.net/news/2020/04/23/coronavirus-mental-health-response-fund/>

Peace Award Nominations Wanted

Do you know a person or an organisation that has done something to promote reconciliation or peace this year? Nominations are now sought for the 2020 Wilson Hinkes Peace Award. The Award is part of the Week of Prayer for World Peace (WPWP), which encourages people of all faiths to pray for peace.

The Award was established by the WPWP to recognise significant contributions by individuals, organisations or projects in furthering peace, justice and reconciliation at local levels. Focused on recognising grassroots initiatives, the Award enables otherwise untold stories to be told and honoured and seeks to inspire others to work for peace. Recent awards have been made to a woman who helps organise an annual peace walk, someone promoting peace education, two community groups supporting refugees, and someone in Burundi helping returning refugees. The Award carries a value of £500.

Named in honour of Revd. Gordon Wilson and Revd. Sidney Hinkes, both former Chairs of the WPWP, the Award is made annually.

Nominations can come from any individual or group. Submissions in the form of a letter describing the nominee's contribution to peace and justice issues should be sent to the WPWP Committee members: Sue Gale billandsuegale@blueyonder.co.uk and Sue Claydon chair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

The closing date for nominations is 30 August 2020.

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/>

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>

Harvard University currently have 64 courses free online: <https://online-learning.harvard.edu/catalog>

Please click on 'price' and then 'free' to find all free courses.

Free Online Courses With The Guildford Institute

The Guildford Institute is hosting a variety of online courses encouraging people to try something new whilst at home. The courses vary from learning languages such as Italian or Spanish to Yoga for Everybody, 'Discover your Inner Cartoonist' and Tai Chi, plus much more.

For more information and details about how to see the full listing of fantastic courses, please see the flyer and follow this link to the website - <https://www.guildford-institute.org.uk/events/category/online-courses/>

Healthy Surrey Virtual Wellbeing Hub

Focus on your wellbeing with the Surrey Virtual Wellbeing Hub. Join a coffee morning from your kitchen, or a Zumba class from your living room!

Here's the link for you to find a session - <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mental-wellbeing/adults/virtual>



WEA Adult Learning Free Online Courses

The WEA are offering a variety of free online training including: Intro to being a Teaching Assistant, Supporting Children with Autism, Helping your child to manage stress and anxiety, Confidence to return to work and many more. For more information please visit:

<https://www.wea.org.uk/southern/learn-something-new-free-online>

Free Mindfulness Resources as a Response to Covid-19

The outbreak of coronavirus has led to significant changes for many of us across the world. We are having to adapt to challenging circumstances in terms of our work, home life or financial situation, while making sense of moving most of our interactions with others in to the online world.

It is heart-warming to see that many organisations and teachers are providing free access to mindfulness online.

Please visit: <http://www.freemindfulness.org/covid19> for a list of new offerings that are, free, mindfulness-related resources from experienced teachers. If you are aware of a mindfulness resource that has been developed or some freely-available online practice sessions, feel free to email: peter@freemindfulness.org



Volunteering opportunities:

For information on how you can volunteer and help in different ways:

Surrey County Council and local volunteering centres:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/coronavirus/community-support/offer-help>

NHS Volunteer Responders: NHS Volunteer Responders has been set up to support the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak. To do this we need an 'army' of volunteers who can support the 1.5m people in England who are at most risk from the virus to stay well. Our doctors, nurses and other professionals will be able to refer people in to NHS Volunteer Responders and be confident that they have been matched with a reliable, named volunteer. For more information please visit: <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>

Covid-19 Mutual Aid: focus on providing resources and connecting people to their nearest local groups, willing volunteers and those in need. For more information please visit: <https://covidmutualaid.org/>

Nextdoor neighbourhood hub -Nextdoor is the best way to stay informed about what's going on in your neighbourhood: <https://nextdoor.co.uk/>

Woking Debate on Zoom

As we begin to look to a time of recovery we thought it would be good to consider what kind of society we want to build. Accordingly we are continuing the Woking Debates in a Zoom format following the success of the one we held on Saturday 9 May until we can meet together.

Our topic on Saturday 4 July is **Happiness and fulfilment rather than economic growth?**

11.00 am—12.30 pm.

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

Useful Information and Contact Information

Information on Coronavirus in different languages:

<https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/news/coronavirus-information/>

Big Leaf Foundation has made translations of the NHS guidance on COVID-19 available for download directly from: <https://www.bigleaffoundation.org.uk/covid-19-advice.html>

(These are languages specifically common to the refugee community)

People escaping domestic violence:

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 200 0247 (24hr) or Your Sanctuary: 01483 776822

Citizen's Advice: Benefits, Emergency Aid, Food Vouchers, Housing, Debt, Consumer and Legal Issues

Surrey Heath: 03444 111 444 or e: client@camberley.cabnet.org.uk

Mole Valley: 03444 111 444 or online form: <https://citizensadvicemolevalley.org.uk/get-advice/forms/>

Dorking, email: dorking@camv.org.uk

Leatherhead, email: leatherhead@camv.org.uk

Esher: 01372 464770 or send a message via online form: www.eshercab.org.uk.

Elmbridge: 0300 330 1179 or e: advice@caew.org.uk

Guildford: 0300 330 9013 or message using online form: <https://www.guildfordcab.org.uk/get-advice/forms/>

Reigate & Banstead: 03444 111 444 or online form: <https://www.carbs.org.uk/get-advice/forms/>

Epsom & Ewell, 0300 330 1164 or email: office@caee.org.uk

Oxted, 03444 111 444 or e: advisers@oxted.cabnet.org.uk

Waverley: 0344 848 7969 or please visit: <https://waverleycab.org.uk/> to send an email via the online form.

Woking: 03444 111 444 or send a message online: <https://www.wokingcab.org/get-advice/>

Caterham: 03444 111 444 or email: office@caterham.cabnet.org.uk

Runnymede and Spelthorne: 01932 827187 or e: adviser@randscab.org.uk

Health and well-being - how libraries can help

Libraries can be a great source of help and support to individuals and families. To find out how, please visit:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries/health-and-well-being-how-libraries-can-help>

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.

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

www.sfitogether.org

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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

Surrey Faith Links, Diocese of Guildford

Church House Guildford, 20 Alan Turing Road, Guildford, GU2 7YF

T: 07552 845688, E: Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk

W: www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk



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