



September 2024

LINK-UP

Keeping Churches in Touch

www.godalmingchurches.org

facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict

Message from the Chair

Through September several church communities will be observing the 'Season of Creation'. This is a relatively new liturgical observance which has taken hold in the last couple of decades. Late September and early October were traditionally kept as Harvest – at Farncombe our Harvest Festival is always on the first Sunday in October – even though across the UK the 'harvest', agriculturally speaking, is mostly in long before we reach this point. In 1989 the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew set aside September 1st as a Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation to be observed by Orthodox Christians, opening up the idea of a special season of Creation between then and the Feast of St Francis of Assisi on October 4th, thus fitting in well with the old observance of Harvest (at least in Europe).

No matter what Christian community we belong to or which brand of theology we follow, we all share one planet. We often talk about 'the environment' as though it was something separate from human beings, and 'stewardship of creation' as though it was something nice and virtuous which we should be congratulated for but not really necessary. The truth is that it's our very existence: our food, energy, and shelter. We can't manage without it, and we are part of it.

A couple of years ago I attended a conference about faith and climate change at Surrey University where a rabbi who was an activist with Extinction Rebellion basically told us that within a century society would collapse, most human beings would die, we should all get used to it, and the role of religion in this business is to express grief and mourning. It wasn't very encouraging to say the least. Long-term damage to the created order does indeed threaten human survival (though the scientists are not sure how far down this road we've gone) – but as well as thinking about and stressing human responsibility for the creation God has given us to look after, the task of Christians is to remind everyone (including ourselves) that, no matter what happens, the Lord reigns, his purposes advance, and our ultimate hope is to discern and align ourselves with his everlasting will.

Rev James Rattue, Chair of Churches Together in Godalming and District

jamesrattue@hotmail.com

Churches Together events

Saturday 26 October, 8.30am – Prayer Breakfast, St John's Farncombe

Friday 15 November, Open Meeting following the United Church Fellowship Lunch from 12.00pm. Please save this date – more details to follow.

Saturday 23 November, 8.30am – Prayer Breakfast, The Cellar Café

Other events

Study morning about St John Henry Newman, 21 September 2024

St Augustine's Abbey, Chilworth

Saturday 21 September 2024 10.30am to 12.20pm

Members of the public of all faiths and none are invited to learn about St John Henry Newman, the Convert on Saturday 21 September 2024.

The Study Morning will take place at the Roman Catholic Benedictine monastery of St Augustine's Abbey, Chilworth near Guildford. Fr John Seddon OSB, resident Benedictine monk at the monastery, will show Bishop Barron's video on Catholicism's Pivotal Players and then lead the discussion about it afterwards.

Members of the public attending need no prior knowledge, do not have to be Catholic and don't have to contribute anything if they prefer. Optional holy Roman Catholic Mass is at 9.00am in the Abbey Church. Then, we meet in the Assisi Room at the rear of the monastery for a Video and Talk from 10.30am to 12.20pm.

Refreshments will be freely available. Bring a friend if possible.

The Study morning is free to attend, however £10 per person is being charged for refreshments and room hire.

Advance booking is advised at <https://www.chilworthbenedictines.com/study-morning-st-john-henry-newman-the-convert>

News of the Churches and organisations

Godalming Minster

We are delighted for John and Sue Harkin that they have accepted the offer of a clergy retirement property, and will be moving to Cornwall soon after 13 October. Please pray for John and Sue as they begin their retirement from parish ministry. John's moving soon means that our two clergy posts which are being advertised can progress smoothly.

New Associate Minister roles

We are now advertising two exciting Associate Minister roles for Franklyn Road and Mission and Evangelism, and for Hambledon and Discipleship. The jobs are advertised on New Wine, The Church Times, CofE Guilford and Pathways. Please do pray and share the ads with prospective candidates. Please see our [vacancies page](#) for details, pray for the right candidates, and help share the ads!

Alpha Course starting September

Wednesday evenings from 25 September to 27 November and Thursday lunchtimes from 26 September to 28 November.

Rev Lesley Mason is leading the courses this autumn, and we'd like everyone to consider whether they would like to join in as a participant, or as a member of the team who helps lead, host and cater for the 12 sessions.

A huge thank you to those of you who have already volunteered to help with food and who have signed up to pray for Alpha. We have catering in place for the evening sessions but we still need the following:

Additional catering for lunch time sessions, including the Saturday session (when both groups come together) eg soup, sandwiches or bread and cheese, sausage rolls etc and a traybake, cookies or equivalent.

One or two volunteers to help - preferably every week at lunch time or evening - to meet and greet, help set up tables and ensure that the catering group that evening know what to do

Please volunteer via the [website](#), or by email direct to Sandra Wilkin - sandra.wilkin@godalmingminster.org

Look out for invitations, posters and social media posts and please share them and encourage people along.

To find out more or register for a place go to <https://godalmingminster.org/alpha>
godalmingminster.org

St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

On 14 September – one of the National Heritage Open Days – we'll continue marking the 175th anniversary of St John's with a talk about the graves and monuments in the churchyard and the church itself, exploring some of the people commemorated and the stories they bring to light. Our latest Messy Church will follow that afternoon! We've just received a detailed Fire Safety report after a visit from the Fire & Rescue Service a few months ago, and are now beginning the process of working through the advice so we comply fully with regulations.

www.farncombe.org.uk

Godalming Baptist Church

Coffee Stop, Saturday 14 September

Join us on Saturday 14 September from 10.00am to 12.00pm for coffee/tea and delicious homemade cakes. No charge, but donations much appreciated to Charlie's Promise - helping to prevent knife crime. This charity was set up by the Cosser family, whose son Charlie was tragically killed by knife crime.

Women's ecumenical breakfast, Saturday 21 September

You are warmly invited to join us for breakfast (tea and toast or a full English!) and then be encouraged by our lovely Speaker, Linda Chamberlain. Please contact Sally Pollard on 01483 428646 or pollard3@hotmail.co.uk if you are able to come as numbers have to be given in advance. We would love to see you!

Godalming through the ages, Friday 11 October

David Rose returns to GBC to lead a session on Godalming through the ages. Come and hear about former industries, shops, pubs and famous folk with many vintage photographs, 7.30pm to 9.00pm (coffee from 7.00pm)

Living with anxious thoughts, Saturday 19 October

Life Issue '*Living with anxious thoughts*' led by Dr Martin Brunet, GP at Binscombe Medical Centre, 10.00am to 12.30pm (coffee from 9.30am). Living with anxious thoughts is so hard. Dr Brunet will cover intrusive thoughts, health anxiety, understanding where these thoughts come from and how best to manage them. There is no charge, but voluntary donations towards the Farncombe Community Garden will be much appreciated.

To book a place at any of the above please contact Sally Pollard-01483-428646 or e-mail pollard3@hotmail.co.uk

Book Review for September: *Unpopular Culture* by Guvna B

Popular culture is full of phrases telling us the best way to live, the right things to buy, the right body shape to have. But what if there is another way? What if we choose to live differently to stand against injustice, to live life for more than just ourselves, to dare to be unpopular.

Visit our library

Our library is for everyone! Do call in weekday mornings (subject to bookings), from 9.00am to 12.00pm term-time only to browse and borrow a book. We have a range of books on life issues

and books to encourage us on our faith journey. The library will be open in August on Friendship Lunch days - Thursday 8 and 22 August.

www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk

Godalming United Church

Online services: <https://guc.online.church>.

Service recordings: www.guc.org.uk, <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube>.

Sylvia Kelley

Sadly, we must report the death of our dear friend Sylvia Kelley in August.

Sylvia lived out a life of Christian love and commitment both in our church, the town, the wider Methodist circuit and in our struggling world - through the charitable work she shared with her husband Ryan.

Back in the 1970s, she grappled with the task of creating Godalming United Church from the merger of the two neighbouring churches on either side of the river, and for many years she was our Church Secretary. She was involved with both older folk and children, and an authority on Safeguarding. The Kelleys' links with West Africa led to an especially close relationship with Grace and Daniel Pratt Morris Chapman who were always welcome at their home with their growing family when on leave from their missionary work.

Thank you Sylvia: you have been a wise, kindly and modest friend to us all and will be greatly missed.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Looking Ahead

Saturday 7 September, 2.30pm to 4.00pm: Cream Tea on the patio in support of GUC's Gambia Ophthalmic project. Please support the Kelleys' huge commitment to their charitable work in The Gambia. Just £15 pays for a sight-saving cataract operation.

For more information and other future events, visit www.guc.org.uk for a constantly updated rolling calendar.

www.guc.org.uk

Roman Catholic Parish of St Edmund, King & Martyr, Godalming with St Joseph's Milford

Pope Francis' prayer intention for September

Pope Francis' prayer intention for September is that each of us listen with our hearts to the cry of the Earth and of the victims of environmental disasters and the climate crisis, making a personal commitment to care for the world we inhabit.

The Season of Creation

During September we celebrate this season, which starts with a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on 1 September, and continues through until 4 October, the Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi. This year's theme is 'To Hope and Act with Creation'. Over the weekend of 14 and 15 September, at our Season of Creation Masses, our Live Simply group will be asking people to reflect, and write down on a hexagon shape, their thoughts in response to two questions: how are we living more simply? What else could we do to live more simply?

It is hoped that the hexagons will create an amazing patchwork display of actions and suggestions for the parish to reflect on. We are also invited to join a webinar '[Pioneering Parishes: How Local Church Communities Can Become Guardians of Creation - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk)' organised in conjunction with CAFOD, on 4 September at

6.00pm. More info from: jolewry@aol.com

Blessing of students and teachers

At this time of year when schools, colleges and universities reopen after the summer break, there will be a special blessing at all our parish Masses over the weekend of the 7 and 8 September, as all those in education return for the next academic year.

Surrey Churches Ride & Stride

This annual fundraising event takes place on Saturday 14 September, and 50% of the funds raised go to the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust. More info at:

www.surreychurchespreservationtrust.org.

There will be a group of parish cyclists leaving St Johns, Farncombe at 10.00am, and they would love you to join them. You don't have to follow the long route (Compton, Puttenham, Elstead, Milford, Godalming and back to Farncombe), just do as much as you wish! For more info, and to sponsor, please contact Ian: honeysett@btinternet.com

Clothes collection for the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

Men often arrive with only the clothes they are wearing, and the GDWG need the following good quality items (in all sizes, small to XXLL): jeans/jogging bottoms/chinos (not suit trousers), T-shirts, jumpers, hoodies, jackets (not suit jackets), flip flops/trainers in sizes 8, 9 and 10, holdalls, backpacks/suitcases. Also, new socks and boxers (no second-hand underwear). NB Men's clothes only. To donate (by last week of September) please get in touch with the parish office: godalming@abdiocese.org.uk. Thank you.

Bumps & Babes

The first session after the summer break is on Monday 9 September at St John's Farncombe from 10.30am to 12.00pm. The group welcomes all mums to be as well as mums (or grandparents!) with newborns and toddlers.

Children's Liturgy

Children's Liturgy starts again at the 8.45am Mass at St John's from Sunday 15 September.

Weekend Masses

Weekend Masses are celebrated at St Edmund's Godalming (6.00pm Vigil Mass) on Saturday evenings; and on Sundays at St John's Farncombe at 8.45am, (and with coffee after Mass 15 September); and at St Joseph's Milford at 10.30am.

Weekday Masses

The dates, times and venues of these vary, so please check the calendar on the home page of our website: www.stedsgod.com

Parish gatherings

We offer a warm welcome to newcomers at our regular parish gatherings:

- Live Simply, our parish eco-group, meets monthly, with the next meeting on Thursday 3 October, 8.00pm. Joining details from Jo: jolewry@aol.com
- SVP Afternoon Tea on Wednesday 11 September at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church, Elstead (phone 07379 108009).
- Prayer Group on Monday evenings (phone Richard for details on 01252 702230), starting at 7.30pm.

St Edmund's church remains open every day for private prayer, usually between 10.00am and 5.00pm. (19 Croft Road, Godalming GU7 1DB).

www.stedsgod.com

The Franciscan Centre Ladywell

September 6 Day Individually Guided Retreat (IGR)

Date: 22 to 29 September

Suggested offering: £520

Step away from the noise and haste of your everyday life and into the quiet beauty of the Franciscan Centre Ladywell in the heart of Surrey. Set on expansive grounds which are peaceful and beautiful, with wonderful walks and a stunning woodland to explore, find God in the sacred book of nature and in the peaceful, prayerfulness of our wonderful house.

Each day you will be accompanied by a trained spiritual director, who will listen attentively and offer suggestions for allowing you to go deeper into your relationship with God.

Arrival Sunday 22 September evening from 4.00pm and depart next Sunday 29 September morning after breakfast and Mass.

Cultivating an Ecological Spirituality

Led by: Jane Mellet

Date: 18 to 20 October

Suggested offering: £180

Join us for this weekend retreat in the beautiful surroundings of the Franciscan Centre Ladywell. During these days we will explore how to cultivate an ecological spirituality. These days will be a mix of input with plenty of time for reflection, time in nature and experiencing various contemplative practices which can help us to cultivate an ecological spirituality, nourish and sustain oneself amid ecological breakdown / discerning a way forward.

Jane holds a Masters in Theology from Maynooth University. She works as the Laudato Si' Officer in Trócaire and with the Laudato Si' Movement. Her role involves sharing the wisdom of Pope Francis' encyclical, *On Care for Our Common Home*, with grassroots faith communities. How can faith groups engage in climate actions and respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor? Laudato Si' gives us the blueprint. Jane is a qualified spiritual director. She is co-author of two books, "The Deep End – A Journey with the Sunday Gospels in the Year of Luke" and "The Deep End – A Journey with the Sunday Gospels in the Year of Matthew".

Our programme of events offers participants the opportunity to experience the Beauty, Goodness and Generosity of God in a reflective hospitable Franciscan environment, through retreats, quiet days and workshops. There is also the opportunity for Spiritual Direction from our Spiritual Directors.

We offer a place that allows for a deepening of your relationship with God, a place of welcome and safety as you navigate closer to your Creator. Take quiet time away from the haste of everyday life, either on a retreat or by engaging in the programmes and workshops we offer. The Franciscan Centre Ladywell is open for anyone seeking some space and quiet time.

Any enquiries or to book your place please email us at franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk
<https://franciscancentre.org.uk>

Godalming Quakers

Sunday Meetings for Worship

The regular weekly worship session continues to be held on Sunday mornings, starting at 10.30am at the Quaker Meeting House in Mill Lane, and all are welcome.

www.quaker.org.uk/meetings/godalming

Trinity Trust Team

We hope you are all well and had enjoyable and refreshing summers. After a long, packed summer term and activities week, we all took a break and are now back and raring to go as schools re-open for the autumn term and we resume our regular groups, programmes and activities.

Our annual summer activities week was, again, hugely successful with great turnout and engagement with the young people. It was lovely to join others from local churches at the Staycation bandstand service (and a relief to see children appear before the children's talk)!

Sadly, Ola has announced he is leaving TTT for a role with an inter-cultural church in Slough, so he goes with our blessing. Thank you, all of you, who made him feel so welcome here over the last year.

As a result, we are looking for volunteers or experienced youth/children's workers to join us:

- Wowza after school club every Monday at Godalming Junior School
- Fusion children's group midweek at Godalming Baptist Church
- FUSE discipleship group midweek at Godalming Baptist Church

If you, or someone you know might be interested in volunteering or paid opportunities with TTT please contact Andy Poulson on andy@trinitytrustteam.co.uk

Please pray for:

- continued opportunities to prosper the gospel in schools and communities
- the right team resources to continue all our various ministries
- new/existing partnerships within local churches to flourish
- local young people to want to know Jesus and be transformed by him
- all those who currently donate to TTT (both corporately and individually).

We continue to thank all those who play a part in and support the youth ministry of the Trinity Trust Team. Our thanks and blessings to you all at the start of yet another school year (my 19th in post)!

Items for next month's *Link-up*

Please send items for the October 2024 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow:

farrow.matt@gmail.com by **Friday 20 September**, for publication on Friday 27 September.