



December 2022

# LINK-UP

*Keeping Churches in Touch*

[www.godalmingchurches.org](http://www.godalmingchurches.org)

[facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict](https://facebook.com/ChurchesTogetherinGodalmingandDistrict)

## Message from the Chair

December is a busy month for us. It's not only the corporate acts of witness and service – at Christmas Together on 10 December, and the Christmas Day lunch for those who would otherwise be on their own – but the many services and other events in our member churches. In this way we can show the local community the true meaning of Christmas.

I think this is more important than ever. First because of the contrast between the temptation of excess and the grim reality of daily life for so many people today. Christmas – and the season of preparation leading up to it – is all about the arrival of our Lord in the physical world, and our reception of him in our hearts. Second because the latest official figures confirm the continuing retreat of Christian faith in our country. It would be easy to be discouraged. We need to remember that the Christian message is not the problem, it's the solution.

*James Toon, Chair of Churches Together in Godalming and District*

07803 812094

[james.toon@mac.com](mailto:james.toon@mac.com)

## Christmas Together in Godalming

Saturday 10 December is our Christmas Together day. It will include the Churches Together logo on publicity material, posters, banners etc. As before, the Churches Together star will be under the arch.

- 3.15pm – we will gather in the Crown Court area where the Rodborough School Jazz Band will be playing.
- 4.00pm – in the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, there will be carols (choirs from Broadwater School and the Ukraine), readings, and a Nativity from scratch led by the Trinity Trust Team.

There will be a retiring collection for the Cellar Camino Café and the Denningberg Centre.

We will need help on the day. if you can give some time to be a steward, please contact Michael Stubbs at [michaeleashing@aol.com](mailto:michaeleashing@aol.com).

# News of the Churches and organisations

## Parish of Godalming

### **St Peter & St Paul**

- Sunday 11 December, 10.00am - Holy Communion
- Sunday 18 December, 8.00am - Holy Communion
- Sunday 18 December, 7.00pm - Carols by Candlelight
- Christmas Eve 24 December - Candlelit Celebration for all the family - Booking is required (if over-subscribed, a second service will be held).  
<https://bhcgodalming.churchsuite.com/events/aw7rtbyl>
- Christmas Eve Saturday 24 December, 11.30pm - Midnight Communion
- Christmas Day Sunday 25 December, 10.00am - Christmas Day Family Communion.

### *Godalming Minster*

The parishes of St Peter and St Paul's Church with St Mark's Church, Busbridge and Hambledon have voted in favour of uniting to become one parish known as Godalming Minster, and a preliminary Contemporary Service with children's groups in the Octagon at St Peter and St Paul's Church on 6 November made a very positive and encouraging start to Minster contemporary services.

The Minster Steering Group is busy identifying key tasks and transition challenges which need to be addressed for us to continue to move forward. With the contemporary congregation from Busbridge moving to St Peter and St Paul's Church in 2023, there will need to be re-ordering of the interior of the building to enable it to be better equipped for mission activities. Meetings are currently being held to engage with the short and long-term possibilities this offers.

### *Octots*

Our toddler group, Octots, meets on Mondays during term time from 10.00am to 11.30am in the Octagon. There are lots of play-based activities for children to use independently and with their adult (slides, ride-ons, role play, puzzles, books and resources to explore). Hot drinks are served by our dedicated volunteers. We finish the session with songs and rhymes. The group is currently full with many waiting for a space. If you would like to be added to the waiting list, please email the Church Office [godalming.church.office@gmail.com](mailto:godalming.church.office@gmail.com).

### *Baby Group*

The Baby Group (newborn to crawlers) is a popular group meeting at St Peter & St Paul on Wednesdays from 10.00am to 11.00am during term time. Led by Vickie Nye, our Children and Families Worker. We hope to welcome and support some new families, and there is space for up to eight families. More details from Vickie at [godalming.church.office@gmail.com](mailto:godalming.church.office@gmail.com).

## *Godalming Community Gospel Choir Christmas Showcase*

Godalming Community Gospel Choir would love to see you at our much-acclaimed Christmas Showcase at St Peter & St Paul on Saturday 10 December at 7.30pm. We'll be having a full band and guest soloist Kathy McLeish from Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir, and serving mulled wine and mince pies. Tickets are available for £10 from Record Corner, Godalming, at the door on the night or by ordering from [info@gcgc.org.uk](mailto:info@gcgc.org.uk). You'll find more information on our website [www.gcgc.org.uk](http://www.gcgc.org.uk). Don't miss GCGC's biggest event of the year!

## **St Mark's**

### *December Services*

- Sunday 11 December, 10.00am - Holy Communion
- Sunday 18 December, 10.00am - Service of the Word
- Sunday 18 December, 6.00pm - Carol Service
- Christmas Eve Saturday 24 December, 4.00pm - Crib Service
- Christmas Day Sunday 25 December, 10.00am - Christmas Day Family Communion.

### *Smart Tots*

This church-led activity is for parents and toddlers at St Mark's. The group meets on Wednesdays, running from 9.00am to 11.00am. The aim is to offer a welcoming space for toddlers and parents to socialise, meet new people and make friends.

### *The Warm Hub*

Every Tuesday of the month, 12.30pm to 4.00pm. Serving soup and a roll, sandwiches and cake. Food served until 2.00pm. Come out of the cold and experience a warm welcome at St Mark's during these cold spells. If you are able to book, please call 01483 418741. For more information, contact Rev Sheila Samuels at [curate.godalming@gmail.com](mailto:curate.godalming@gmail.com) or on 07901 170503.

### *Foodbank*

The Foodbank list is updated each month on the website. Your financial donations are important to us, and if you would like to donate, please contact Karen, our Community Centre Co-ordinator who will provide the bank details. Email [stmarkscentre@googlemail.com](mailto:stmarkscentre@googlemail.com).

Heartfelt thanks for the overwhelming generosity of churches, schools and others for the Harvest Festival collections; it has been a fantastic and very much appreciated response.

We need volunteers to help out on a Monday afternoon from 12.00pm until 2.30pm. Helpers provide a warm welcome and hospitality to people needing to use the foodbank. Helpers also help with stocking shelves and packing parcels. If you would like more information, then please contact Rev Sheila Samuels.

## *The Churches Together Christmas Lunch*

Volunteers are needed to help with the Christmas Lunch on Christmas Day at the Baptist Church, for anyone who would otherwise be on their own. We are also still looking for a volunteer co-ordinator and so if anyone would be willing to do this, please let Sarah Higgins know at [sarahhiggins478@gmail.com](mailto:sarahhiggins478@gmail.com). A letter to guests, an invitation form and the form setting out the various roles, are available on our website.

[www.parishofgodalming.org.uk](http://www.parishofgodalming.org.uk)

## Busbridge&Hambleton Church

BHC is giving thanks for events in November, and signs of the love of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.

- Busbridge Church was literally packed for an incredibly humbling event led by four brave Ukrainian teenagers. Thank you to Sarah Black and her team, and special thanks to Councillors Michael Stubbs and Penny and Paul Rivers for attending (Michael was there from 3pm!) and for kind words of support from our MP and Chancellor. We learnt a great deal about the Christian history and faith of many Ukrainians.
- Our friends from Ukraine were asking for a small donation of £2 for some cards/paintings. People dug deep, and over £1,000 was raised to provide thermal socks to send to Ukraine. In addition, HJ Hall & Son (specialist extreme conditions clothing manufacturer) have offered a massive discount to allow twice as many socks to be bought. Thank you to HJ Hall, Maria & Martin and the Ukrainian artists and everyone who demonstrated that kindness is very much alive in the face of darkness.
- Our mission of God's love through the Hearing Aid Clinics has grown to the point where Penny Naylor's clinic in Godalming library had more people attending than ever before. Thank you to Penny for this mission.
- Children at BIS and BJS, and Prime Timers have made over 600 stars for the Busbridge Church Christmas "Follow the Star" installation... and there was great fun this week hanging them across the church. The church looks stunning and all are welcome to come and have a look.
- Sarah Rowden, an ordinand, has joined the clergy team.
- Busbridge Church with its big screen are providing a great venue for showing England and Wales World Cup matches. It's family-friendly, admission is free and refreshments are provided. Further England matches, the semi-final and final will also be shown.
- There's much to celebrate as we reach out in faith and share our faith in Christ. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us into more encounters during Advent.

We are looking forward to sharing the 4.00pm Christmas Eve family celebration with Godalming parish at St Peter and St Paul's this year as we start to work more closely together

in 2023 on the journey to become Godalming Minster by the start of 2024.

[www.bhcgodalming.org](http://www.bhcgodalming.org)

## St John's Parish Church, Farncombe

This Christmas we are resuming some of the worship we were used to before the pandemic and will return to our usual Crib Service on Christmas Eve, as well as the Carol Service on the evening of Sunday 18 December, which is a lovely community occasion – do come if you can.

Our popular 'Carols By Candlelight' is on Friday 23 December, but we may have to restrict numbers this year – watch the website for more details. We'll also host the Infants School, Broadwater School, U3A, and Big Group Sing for their Christmas events.

[www.farncombe.org.uk](http://www.farncombe.org.uk)

## Godalming Baptist Church

### *Warm place*

We have opened Godalming Baptist Church up as a 'Warm place' on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9.00am until 12.00pm where folk can enjoy a warm drink, read a newspaper or play a board game.

### *Christmas Services*

There will be a Toy Service at 10.00am on Sunday 11 December where toys for Christian Care Merton will be donated, a Family Service on Sunday 18 December, again at 10.00am, with a guest appearance of Jaspar! Carols by Candlelight will take place on Sunday 18 December at 6.00pm, and Carols round the piano on Friday 23 December at 6.30pm and a Christmas Service at 10.00am on Christmas Day.

### *Being a Grandmother in your community*

Turning to January, we have an uplifting morning on Saturday 21 January with a Life issue event 'Being A Grandmother in your community' led by Kathleen Smith from 10.00am to 12.30pm (coffee from 9.30am). Please do call in to GBC for a copy of our Life Issue brochure. There is a range of Life Issue sessions to come to, for yourselves and others.

### *Library*

A reminder too that we have a great library for everyone to enjoy, with books on many life issues and also books to encourage, challenge and equip us on our faith journey. Reception is open every morning during term time from 9.00am to 12.00pm to browse in the Library (subject to lettings).

### *Board games afternoon and Art Space*

There is a monthly board games afternoon and a monthly Art Space where a warm welcome awaits. Please contact Sally Pollard on 01483 428646 or at [pollard3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pollard3@hotmail.co.uk) for details.

We send our love and warmest greetings at Christmas time and God bless you all this Christmas time and for the New Year.

[www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.godalmingbaptistchurch.org.uk)

## Godalming United Church

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

Service recordings: [www.guc.org.uk](http://www.guc.org.uk), <https://bit.ly/GUCYouTube>.

### *Upcoming events*

- Saturday 10 December, 3.00pm to 5.00pm - Messy Church

Christmas is Coming! Family activities for all ages, church trail, puppet play, songs, party tea  
[messy.church@guc.org.uk](mailto:messy.church@guc.org.uk)

- Saturday 17 December, 7.00pm - Godalming Band Christmas Concert

[www.godalmingband.org.uk](http://www.godalmingband.org.uk), [www.ticketsource.co.uk/godalmingband/t-pqllao/](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/godalmingband/t-pqllao/)

- Sunday 18 December, 6.00pm - Candlelit Carol Service
- Saturday 24 December, 4.00pm Christmas Eve Communion

A quiet time for adults.

- Sunday 25 December, 10.00am - Christmas Day Family Service

A short service for all the family. Bring along one of your presents to show everyone!

### *The gift of sight this Christmas*

Decorate our foyer Christmas tree with a card to greet the community: buy a home-made card in aid of our Gambia ophthalmic project (just £15 pays for a cataract operation).

We are open as a WARM SPACE on Fridays December 2, 9 and 16, 12.00 to 3.00pm, resuming 6 January onwards. Free hot drinks. Reasonably priced lunches available 12:00pm to 1:30pm.

[www.guc.org.uk](http://www.guc.org.uk)

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

Pope Francis' intention for December is that we pray that volunteer non-profit organisations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international co-operation.

### *Live Simply Christmas Appeal for St Mark's Foodbank*

We are asking the parish to help St Mark's Foodbank with Christmas parcels which are sent out to families through four local schools, by donating Christmas themed food items to the collection boxes at our churches by 11 December. Items needed are Christmas puddings,

Christmas cakes, fancy biscuits/selection boxes, Mr Kipling cakes eg Angel/Unicorn slices, stuffing mix, mince pies, cranberry sauce, Christmas crackers, foil, all butter mince pies.

#### *Lectio Divina with Fr Jonathan during Advent*

This is a particularly fruitful form of prayer and can really bring the scriptures alive. On Wednesday evenings in Advent, starting on 30 November, at 7.30pm on Zoom (ID 846 7892 5944, password 2022). See the parish website for some background information and resources on Lectio Divina: <https://stedsgod.com/lectio-divina>

#### *St Edmund's School PSA Christmas Market*

St Edmund's School PSA Christmas Market is on Saturday 3 December from 11.00am to 2.00 pm, with lots of fun stalls and refreshments.

#### *Christmas schedule of Masses*

Outdoor carols at Ladywell Convent 2.30pm on Sunday 18 December, and Christmas Masses at 5.00pm (St Joseph's), 7.00pm and 10.00pm (St Edmund's) on Christmas Eve, and 8.45am (St John's) and 10.30am (St Joseph's) on Christmas Day.

#### *Crib Building at Ladywell Convent*

This takes place at 5.00pm on Thursday 15 December.

#### *Mass times and regular parish events and activities*

*Weekend Masses* are celebrated at St Edmund's (6pm Vigil Mass) on Saturday evenings; and on Sundays at St John's Farncombe at 8.45am, with Children's Liturgy (and with Coffee after Mass on 4 and 18 December); and St Joseph's Milford at 10.30am.

*Weekday Masses*: the dates, times and venues of these vary and can be found on the calendar on our website: [www.stedsgod.com](http://www.stedsgod.com)

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

- *Sycamore Shorts* A new group for parents on Friday mornings, 8.55am to 9.30am, at St Edmund's primary school. A 'drop in at drop off' and a chance to explore an aspect of faith, chat over coffee and pray for the children, with Fr Jonathan.
- *Pizza and Prayer on Sunday evenings with Fr Jonathan*. For young people in Yr9+, at St Edmund's, 6.30pm to 8.00pm. Check parish calendar for dates.
- *Bumps & Babes* on Mondays at 10.30am at St John's, Farncombe (ending 12 December)
- *Live Simply* Our parish group meets monthly and the next meeting is on Thursday 1 December on Zoom. Joining details from Jo: [jolewry@aol.com](mailto:jolewry@aol.com)
- *SVP Afternoon Tea* on Wednesday 14th December at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church, Elstead (to book phone Janet on 07990 717067)
- *Prayer Group on Monday evenings* at earlier time of 5.00pm (phone Richard on 01252

703830).

*Franciscan Centre, Ladywell Convent*

The Advent Retreat 'God So Loved the World...' is a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ once more, and to reflect on the Franciscan understanding of incarnation. Led by Adrian Peelo OFM, it takes place from 14th-18th December at the Franciscan Centre Ladywell. Non-residential cost: £100 (includes lunch and supper, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday). For more information and to book please email [franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk](mailto:franciscancentre@ladywell.org.uk) or telephone 01483 675 575. Website: <https://franciscancentre.org.uk/retreats/>

<https://stedsgod.com>

## Godalming Quakers

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.

We are also holding monthly midweek Meetings for Worship – typically on the last Wednesday of the month – at 6.30pm. These last for half an hour, followed by a time for reflection and sharing. All are welcome.

[www.quaker.org.uk/meetings/godalming](http://www.quaker.org.uk/meetings/godalming)

## Feba

As Christmas approaches please remember our friends working in areas of the world where there is persecution. Join us on zoom at 7.00pm on Wednesday 7 December. Access details on [www.feba.org.uk/prayermeeting](http://www.feba.org.uk/prayermeeting)

## *Items for next month's Link-up*

Please send items for the January 2023 edition of *Link-up* to Matt Farrow: [farrow.matt@gmail.com](mailto:farrow.matt@gmail.com) by **Friday 16 December**, for publication on Friday 23 December.