



**We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world.
(Buddha)**

Thank you once again for your contributions to this newsletter, keep them coming in!

Please feel free to get in contact with me if you would like to know more about SFL or would like support in organising an interfaith event.

Kauser Akhtar (Faith Links Adviser)

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Are we what we eat?

On April 14th, 2015, the Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum organized a public meeting at St Joseph's Church in Guildford at 7.30pm. The subject of the meeting, entitled "Are we what we eat?" focused on the matter of food production, diet and its environmental, ethical and spiritual aspects.

Joyce D'Silva, the ambassador for Compassion in World Farming in Godalming spoke about current factory farming practices and the cruelty involved in these, the negative environmental impact of rearing animals for meat and dairy products and the fact that it is a huge contributor towards global warming, its long term impact being a serious threat to the future of the planet.

Representatives from the Christian Vegetarian Society, the Institute of Jainology, the Sadhu Vaswani Mission (Hindu based), the Hare Krishna Society (Hindu based) and the newly formed Animal Interfaith Alliance also gave interesting, informative and thought provoking talks, each from the perspective of their own faith or belief system ...promoting a vegetarian/vegan diet with regard to protecting the planet; ahimsa (the principle of harmlessness and non-violence); a loving and compassionate concern for the animal kingdom and its welfare and finally, the principle of karma ...i.e. what we sow, we also reap.

There was then a question and answer session lasting around one hour when speakers answered questions from members of the audience.

Reported by: Mercini Sherratt
(Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum)

The Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum organise various public events, for more information please contact Kauser (Faith Links Adviser).

Main Faith Festivals in May 2015

- ◆ 4th - Buddha Day (Buddhist)
- ◆ 14th - Ascension Day (Christian)
- ◆ 15th - Lailat al Miraj (Islam)
- ◆ 23rd—25th - Shavuot (Jewish)
- ◆ 24th - Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)
- ◆ 24th - Pentecost (Christian)
- ◆ 31st - Trinity Sunday (Christian)

Isaiah's Suffering Servant Songs

A Jewish perspective on Isaiah's Suffering Servant Songs was the topic when scholar and author Rabbi Dr David J. Zucker shared his learning with the Council of Christians and Jews in Staines in April. Rabbi Zucker, who currently serves the North West Surrey Synagogue said he had purposely called his talk A Jewish Understanding rather than The Jewish Understanding because there is no one Jewish understanding.

To Christians in the audience a real surprise was that most Jews today hardly know these passages exist. To Christians, the four songs Isaiah 42:1-9, 49:1-13, 50:4-11 and 52:13-53:12 are a key part of the scriptures they know as the Old Testament because in them they see the suffering and rising of Jesus.

To Jews, although they regularly hear the Torah, these "strange, mysterious" poetic verses are an obscure part of the scriptures and are never part of the additional readings from the Prophets read in services. They are simply not taught.

What is more, they are atypical of Jewish thought. In fact, they are unique in the Hebrew scriptures in expressing the concept of vicarious human atonement for sin. Vicarious atonement through animal sacrifice is a familiar concept in Jewish thought but the idea that another person might suffer to this end is found only in this tiny portion of the scriptures.

A question Rabbi Zucker invited us to consider is, who was the suffering servant... someone from Israel's past, present or future, the collective Israel or some other collective group, whether male or female, or male and female? Another was, did Jesus claim to be the Suffering Servant? No, was the consensus.

One question was whether these passages at one time had been part of Jewish teaching and debate. And following from that, had they fallen out of favour in Jewish thinking as part of a reaction to how Christianity had made them so central? Possibly, even probably, said the Rabbi, leaving open a discussion for another time.

To find out more about Rabbi Zucker's latest books *The Bible's Prophets: An Introduction for Christians and Jews* and *The Bible's Writings: An Introduction for Christians and Jews*, visit www.DavidJZucker.org

Our next meeting is on Tuesday October 6 when Liz Harris-Sawczenko, who is the national deputy director of Council of Christians and Jews will be speaking at Staines Synagogue.

Reported by: Jennifer Britt (Council of Christians and Jews, Staines)

INTERFAITH LUNCH

All Saints, Banstead hosted an interfaith lunch on 21st April 2015 where Kauser Akhtar was invited to speak about Islam. It was a great way of dispelling myths about Islam and an opportunity for people to ask questions.



All Saints will be hosting two more lunches where they will invite a Jewish speaker and a Bahai speaker to talk about their faiths.

If you would like to do something similar in your church or faith venue please get in touch.

E: Kauser.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk, T: 01483 790334

A Need on Your Doorstep

Could you be a host and provide hospitality and hope to transform a young person's life?



East to West is seeking hosts to support young people through its Supported Lodgings Project in your area.

East to West was founded in 1996 and each year it brings hope to over 1,500 children, young people and families in Surrey and Berkshire.

The Aim of the Supported Lodgings Project

Our aim is to bridge a transition period from potential homelessness into safe independent living or reconciliation back home. Without the right support, this can be a traumatic time in the life of a young person. The Supported Lodgings Project helps young people aged 16+ by providing them with a safe host family home to live in.

What is Supported Lodgings?

Supported Lodgings places a young person into a family or individual's (host) home for up to two years. It is much like fostering but with the aim that the host and young person work towards an adult to adult relationship. This provides security, stability and confidence for the young person as they move towards independence.

Who can be a Supported Lodgings Host?

The East to West Supported Lodgings Project requires hosts who are from all walks of life, married or single, with or without children, young or not so young. A host doesn't have parental responsibility for the young person, but will help nurture skills such as cooking, budgeting, or shopping economically. All that we ask is that you have spare room, that you are caring, a good listener and willing to give time to support a young person in need.

What support do hosts receive?

Supporting young people in this way is an exciting and rewarding experience. At east to west we provide ongoing training and extensive support to hosts and the young person. As a host you will also receive monthly financial support.



East to West are looking for hosts in your area for more information please go to www.supportedlodgings.org or email us sl@easttowest.org.uk or call us on 07744 949626 or 01784 438007



Young adult carers are young people aged 18-24 who care, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction.

Does caring sometimes affect your studies, your work, your social life, your health?

We look after each other. Join our 18-24 Network! We help young adults who look after a family member

Get out for a free meal with new friends Join our secret Facebook group for chat and information

Meet our learning & earning adviser for 1:1 help

Our Campaign Team is now producing a video with www.fixers.org.uk

To join, text Katie on 07823 412076 or click the 'our network' button on www.actionforcarers.org.uk

“What is Modern Humanism?”

Over 30 people joined in Farnham Humanist’s April lively evening of discussions about “What is Modern Humanism?” led by Chair and Humanist Celebrant Ailsa Davies. After watching Stephen Fry’s four short entertaining “That’s Humanism” videos, everyone divided into four groups each debating one of the video questions: “How do we know what is true?”, “What makes something right or wrong?”, “How can I be happy?” and “What should we think about death?”. Each group summarised their findings to the meeting before opening it up for further discussion.

“How can I be happy?” elicited thoughts such as happiness has a lot to do with relationships and helping others, people can work out their own purpose and fulfilment in life, for some people happiness comes from a loving God but explaining suffering is problematic for many.



www.humanism.org.uk/thatshumanism



In response to “What should we think about death”, everyone agreed on the importance of having a ceremony for those left behind for non-religious people as well as religious. For some people it is comforting to think that life goes on in some form after death, for others it can be a relief not having to worry about what it would be like. The focus should be on making the best of the one life we know we have. There was also agreement of the many problems that would arise if people lived for ever.



“What makes something right or wrong?” The Ten Commandments can be too rigid as there are circumstances when stealing or killing can be the right action. People agreed telling right from wrong is better achieved by “Thinking for myself about the probable consequences of my actions and their effects on others”. The

Golden Rule to “Treat others as you would like to be treated” is a good guiding principle as long as “in their situation” is added to take into account cultural differences. A contrast was made between how non-religious people are able to focus solely on what is best for humanity whereas religious people also have to take their religious teachings into account which can lead to moral contradictions e.g. equality for women and homosexuals.

The question “How do we know what is true” it is much simpler to answer if we are dealing with a physical universe only. Social truths are more difficult to establish than physical ones. It was agreed the scientific method based on reason and evidence is the best approach. It was questioned whether there is such a thing as an absolute truth.

Reported by: Jennie Johnson (Farnham Humanists)

What a Difference Faith Makes... to Homelessness!



This FaithAction report views homelessness as primarily an issue of public health. It highlights the role of faith groups with contributions from over 30 organisations.

The report shows the dual role of faith-based organisations in homelessness – their meeting of a frontline practical support requirement and their advocacy to influence public and political debate. It explores the issues they face and the ‘faith factor’ that influences their work.

If you are delivering services for homeless people, please share your experiences and reflections in relation to this report.

For the report: <http://www.faithaction.net/portal/faith-and-health/our-projects/homelessness/>

Dying Matters Awareness Week 2015

18th - 24th May

This year marks the sixth annual Dying Matter Awareness Week, which will be held from the 18th to 24th of May. The week sees a host of events being held across the country, with the aim of getting people to talk about death, bereavement and preparing for the end of life. They also have a range of resources available to help raise awareness, based on theme of 'Talk, Plan, Live.', which encourages people to prepare (such as writing a will) so that they can live life with peace of mind.

For further information: <http://www.dyingmatters.org/YODO>



Let's talk about it

Carers Week

8th - 14th June 2015

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. This year the theme is 'Building Carer Friendly Communities'. When a community is Carer Friendly, every corner – from the hospital, workplace, primary school, to leisure services and beyond – will be geared towards addressing the needs of carers.



To find out more, make a pledge, or sign up to organise an event or activity, please check out their website: <http://www.carersweek.org/>



Age
Concern
Epsom
Ewell

Do you live in the Epsom & Ewell area?

Could you be a volunteer befriender for an older person or with someone in the early stages of dementia?

We at Age Concern Epsom & Ewell are passionate about giving the older members in our society the understanding and respect that they deserve.

As our population lives longer loneliness can become a big problem. It has the same negative impact on health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day!

Amongst the many services that we provide one of the most worthwhile and rewarding is that of our Befriender Schemes. We are very fortunate to have wonderful volunteers who visit people in their homes for an hour or so to help break up a very long day for someone who is lonely. The word has (thankfully) spread that we are here to help but we (unfortunately) have a waiting list for those who want someone to visit.

We need more volunteers who can spare some time once a week to share a cup of tea, conversation and to bring a smile to someone who has no one to talk to.

We are also aware that as the population ages dementia becomes more prevalent. Dementia can be extremely isolating for the person with the illness. Befriending someone with dementia can be a means of social and emotional support thus reducing this isolation, as well as providing opportunities to share a hobby, an activity or reminisce. Full training is given.

Contact: Liz Hope, Volunteers' Co-ordinator, 01372 732458

email: liz.hope@ageconcernepsom.org.uk, website: www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Surrey Community Building Grants Scheme 2015-2016

The Surrey Community Buildings Scheme is a partnership scheme jointly funded by Surrey County Council and the district and borough councils. It is administered by Surrey Community Action and currently all boroughs/districts are participating with the exception of Epsom & Ewell and Waverley, The Scheme offers capital grants to village halls, community centres and voluntary youth buildings subject to their meeting certain specified criteria.

Grants are available towards the following types of project:-

- providing new community buildings
- extensions to existing buildings
- provision of disability access and facilities
- major structural work
- major refurbishment to hall, kitchens, toilets etc
- unforeseen urgent repairs such as re-wiring or re-roofing
- provision of car parking

Special consideration will be given to applications which are made in order to comply with The Disability Discrimination Act 2004 (Part 3)

Applications with projects costing less than £10,000 in total will not be considered. Grants are not available towards general maintenance work, such as redecorating.

The applicant must be a non-profit making community based organisation with a constitution, a bank account and at least two years' audited accounts, or in the case of smaller charities, statements of accounts

The building for which the grant is sought must be actively managed and marketed for use by the wider community when not required by the applicant organisation. The applicant organisation must demonstrate that the building will be used for at least four evenings and three days per week (including weekends). Priority will be given to those projects used by a wide variety of community groups at all times of the day and those that show a sustainable usage of the building.

Under the SCBGS community organisations may apply to Surrey County Council and to their local district or borough council for up to one third each of the total project cost. The remaining one third or more must be found by the applicant. The maximum grant available from each partner in the scheme is £40,000. However because of the limited funding it is unlikely that there will be more than one maximum grant each year.

Applications are invited from 1st April 2015 and must be submitted by 31st August 2015, with a decision expected by 1st April 2016. The project must be capable of being completed by 31st March 2017

For further information please contact: The Community Buildings Adviser Karen Holdsworth-Cannon at Surrey Community Action, Tel: 01483 447116 Email: karenh@surreyca.org.uk

The Bishop of Guildford's Foundation is an independent charity, set up in 1993 with the aim of supporting local churches and organisations with church links which respond to local needs by developing community projects. It expresses a sense of communal solidarity with people in need and provides a mechanism for wealthier parishes and church members to channel support to needier groups. Grants are made to a wide variety of causes, including charities working with people who have disabilities, family support projects, youth and children's workers, organisations developing employment for vulnerable people, community organisations, projects for the homeless and much else. For more information visit:

<http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/about/bishops-and-senior-staff/foundation>

UPCOMING EVENTS

'Discovering the Hospice Labyrinth'

In 2013, Princess Alice Hospice installed a labyrinth for the use of patients and relatives, a number of whom have reported its positive value. But the Hospice's intention was that the labyrinth should also be a resource for the community.

During the summer months we are inviting groups from within the community to visit the Hospice to learn about the Labyrinth and to experience it for themselves. These visits will include a brief presentation about labyrinths, their history and attributed features, followed by the opportunity to walk the labyrinth, facilitated by our trained labyrinth guides. The visits will take place from 2.30–4.00pm on the following dates: **11 May, 15 June, 20 July, 14 September**



To book a visit please email Revd Dr Steve Nolan Chaplain
Princess Alice Hospice, West End Lane, Esher Surrey KT10 8NA
t:01372 461806, m: 07793 773072, e: chaplain@pah.org.uk, w: www.pah.org.uk

Spelthorne and Guildford Carers' Choir

Spelthorne Carers Choir!

Taster session: Monday 11th May, 11am - 12pm,
Meadowside Anchor Care Home, Knowle Park
Avenue, Staines, Surrey, TW18 1AN

The project is aimed at creating Carers Choirs
across Surrey for people caring for those with
dementia, as an opportunity for peer support,
increased health and wellbeing and respite from
caring.

Mondays 11am- 12pm at Meadowside Anchor
Care Home in Staines. Anchor can provide care
for a limited number of people during this time so
you can participate in the session.

For more information contact Catherine
Learmonth on 01784 446453/

C.Learmonth@spelthorne.gov.uk

Guildford Carers' Choir

When & where?

Every Monday 1 - 2pm at Park Barn Centre, Park
Barn, Drive, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8EN

From 20th April - 6th July 2015.

This is your opportunity to get together with
other carers for company, support, a short break
and most importantly the chance to sing your
hearts out!

For more information contact Hannah Dix on
01483 444767 /Hannah.Dix@guildford.gov.uk

Cost? The choir is FREE to attend for carers.

The choir will be led by a professional singing leader, but there is no previous musical experience necessary.
The choir is intended to be fun and light hearted, and you will not need to be able to read music.

Details of this training can be found online, via: <http://www.surreymusic hub.com/training-cpd/courses/>



**SURREY
MUSIC HUB**



Woking People of Faith, AGM

You are very warmly invited to an informal members and supporters evening with Woking People of Faith, to meet and share a meal with friends in faith to hear stories of engagement from local community members to support us in reviewing our work over the last year to look ahead to the next year as we work together to strengthen relationships across faith and cultural boundaries .

Wednesday 13th May 2015, 7pm – 9pm, St Paul’s Church Community Hall, Oriental Road GU22 7BD

A simple cooked meal will be served, No Cost .

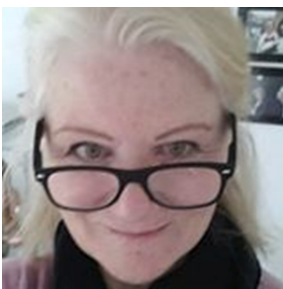
This event forms part of our AGM which will appoint a new management committee.

To book a place please RSVP to Pippa (coordinator@wpof.org.uk) or Zafar (secretary@wpof.org.uk) by Wednesday 6th May 2015. As food will be served, booking is essential.

Also 13th June: WPOF interfaith football championship at Winston Churchill school. 10am – 3pm. Woking Mayor to present prizes. Contact John West for more details: john.west63@ntlworld.com

“27 years in a UK Hindu Cult”

Everyone is welcome!! Do come along and join in



Sunday May 17th, 7pm for 7.30pm start
Daniel Hall, Long Garden Walk, Farnham, GU9 7HX

Alice Herron will be talking about her 27 years in a Hindu-based New Religious Movement in the UK, why she finally decided leave and how she went on to complete an MA in Psychology of Religion from University of London. Her current PhD research is into the mystical-type experiences of atheists. Alice has also won numerous public speaking competitions.

Tea & coffee included. Other drinks available from the Hop Blossom Pub close by. Donation £2 to help costs.

Hosted by **farnhamHUMANISTS**

Enquiries: 01252 723044 www.farnham.humanist.org.uk



OXFORD COUNCIL OF FAITHS ANNUAL FRIENDSHIP WALK OF FAITHS

Thursday 11 June



Starting from the Synagogue, Richmond Road, at 6.15 pm, walking via the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, and ending at the Central Mosque in Manzil Way in Oxford.

For more information please visit:

http://oxcof.c1303782.myzen.co.uk/?page_id=109

Ladies Only Swimming Sessions

Wednesdays 1.15pm -2.00pm (45 minute session) during term time at the Woking Leisure Centre. There will be female lifeguards. For further information contact Woking Leisure Centre & Pool in the Park: Tel: 01483 743119

50th Anniversary of Woking Quakers

2015 is the 50th anniversary of Woking Quakers having their own building and a recognised meeting in Woking. On 17 May at 2pm, Paul Parker the Recording Clerk, roughly the Chief Executive of Quakers in Britain will speak about Quakers today.

People from other faiths will be invited to attend. For more information please contact Keith Scott:
keithsc_2000@yahoo.com

Interfaith lunches

At All Saints Church, Banstead

19 May; 16 June 2015, 12 noon to 2pm

All Saints Church are hosting three lunches, joined by a member of a different faith community each time, to share with us what their faith means to them. We look forward to this opportunity to grow in understanding in a sociable way All welcome. Sharing hospitality, to grow in understanding.

Tickets £5 from Revd Vivien 01737 352060

Diet and Type 2 Diabetes

Including lifestyle and staying mobile

A talk for anyone with an interest in diet and diabetes.

Topics covered include:

- ⇒ What is diabetes?
- ⇒ Symptoms
- ⇒ Complications
- ⇒ How to help lower your risk of diabetes
- ⇒ Diet and lifestyle advice
- ⇒ Specific advice of foot care and diabetes

To book a place call or email Bob Morgan, T: 01483 743340

E: bob.morgan@woking.gov.uk



2pm – 4pm Monday, 1st June 2015

Parkview Centre for the Community
 Blackmore Crescent
 Woking GU19 4PN

Community Open Day

The Surrey Heath Muslim Association invite you to a Muslim Community Open Day; the event seeks to raise awareness of Islam and the Muslim community in general and to develop a better understanding of our diverse multicultural communities in Britain.

At the open day, there will be posters, literature, gift bags, Audio-Visual presentations, as well as activities for adults and children, free refreshments and, most importantly there will be people to answer questions about Islam and Muslims.

Event: Discover Islam

Venue: Ian Goodchild Centre, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3SY

Date: Sunday, 14th June 2015

Time: 11:00 to 16:00

For more information please contact Gemal Dabab E: gdabab@yahoo.co.uk



Surrey Independent Living Fair 2015

Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC) is holding an exhibition fair, with associated workshops and activities, to showcase the diversity of opportunities and choices available in Surrey for disabled adults and children, older people and carers to live more independently. The Surrey Independent Living Fair will be held on Thursday 25th June 2015, 10am-4pm, Epsom Downs Racecourse. The event will cover not only care and support, but also learning and work opportunities, products to purchase, benefits, advocacy, health, as well as interactive leisure and sporting activities for all to participate in if they wish. Last year's event was a great success with over 1,000 people attending. Entry will be free for visitors and a shuttle bus is available from Epsom station to the Race course.

Register your interest to attend at: www.surreyilc.org.uk/fair2015/index.shtml

Contact: Nicola Burrows, office@nb-consultancy.co.uk

Freedom to Share our Faith

Date: 14 July 2015, Time: 18:45 - 20:45

Address: Education Centre, Guildford Cathedral, Stag Hill, Guildford, GU2 7UP

Fee: £10, Speakers: Philip Simpson and Kauser Akhtar

Revd Philip Simpson worked for 10 years in Pakistan with the Church Mission Society. He is now Non-Stipendiary Minister at Christ Church, Woking. Kauser Akhtar is Surrey Faith Links Adviser in Guildford Diocese and married to the Imam at the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking.

Both Christianity and Islam are missionary faiths. In this interactive session, Phil Simpson and Kauser Akhtar will engage from a Christian and a Muslim perspective, with the challenges of sharing faith today. The session will involve a 'scriptural reasoning' exercise through the reading of Qur'anic and Biblical missionary texts. Come prepared to listen, to learn and to share. For more information and booking:

[http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/life/lifelong-learning/summer-school/details/freedom-to-share-our-faith-\(10-15\)](http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/life/lifelong-learning/summer-school/details/freedom-to-share-our-faith-(10-15))

Living Well in Woking - Monday 28 September – Sunday 4 October 2015

In partnership with Surrey County Council, the NHS and our colleagues at Freedom Leisure Woking Borough Council is hosting a Living Well Week at the end of September 2015. On offer will be a fantastic range of health and wellbeing activities in the Borough to inspire people to have fun, be active, eat well and be more informed about how to stay healthier.

This is a community wide event, open to all public, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations and the business community.

More information will be provided between now and September but you're welcome to register your interest or discuss hosting a headline event now by contacting John Maguire, Living & Ageing Well Coordinator, by email john.maguire@woking.gov.uk or telephone 01483 743352.



Surrey Faith Links c/o CET, Diocese of Guildford

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