



***“Lead us from falsehood to truth; from Darkness to light; from Death to immortality and from Lethargy to Activity.”***

Swami Dikshananda Saraswati on Festival of Lights

Thank you for your contributions; look out for the Interfaith Week events near you! If you know of any that are not on the newsletter I would love to hear about them, please get in touch.  
Thank you.

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**Hundreds attend cathedral for refugee response event**

Over 300 people gathered at Guildford Cathedral for the Diocese of Guildford’s PEACE event: Responding to the refugee crisis – a morning dedicated to helping parishes and interested groups learn more about what they can do to help.

Expert speakers advised on approaching the ongoing situation, including Maurice Wren, CEO of the Refugee Council who shared stories and news from the charity which provides refugees with essential supplies and assists in their safe resettlement in the UK. He urged parishes and all those present “not to miss the opportunity to encourage others, especially those in authority, that the clear will of the majority of local people is to do more to help those that are suffering.



“I think the Government has got it wrong, I think they have miscalculated,” said Maurice Wren. “The UK should do more because it can do more! Refugees are an asset, they are keen to contribute to the country that helps them – that has always been the case.

“You should never underestimate the power of filling up the email inbox of an MP. The powerful principle that helped me start my work with the Refugee Council many years ago and the one that still gets me out of bed in the morning is that ‘Refugee rights are our rights’.”

**Main Faith Festivals in November 2015**

- ◆ 1st - All Saints’ Day (Christian)
- ◆ 11th - Diwali (Jain, Hindu & Sikh)
- ◆ 11th - Bandi Chhorh Divas (Sikh)
- ◆ 13th - Birth of the Bab (Baha’i)
- ◆ 14th - Birth of Bahá’u’lláh (Baha’i)
- ◆ 24th - Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Sikh)
- ◆ 25th - Birthday of Guru Nanak (Sikh)
- ◆ 29th - Advent Sunday (Christian)

Bishop Andrew was also present to welcome those involved and acknowledge their compassion. He recognised the UK's long history of welcoming refugees, citing his own grandparents, who took a family of German Jewish refugees into their home during the Second World War. He concluded: "In the end it's up to the Government to make the judgment as to who and how many refugees are allowed to settle in this country. But meanwhile it's up to all of us to promote PEACE – that is to Pray, to Educate, to Act, Campaign and Engage."

Mary Burguieres, Policy and Strategic Partnerships Lead Manager at Surrey County Council, represented a coordinated team across Surrey's local authorities, while Christine Elliott, Director of World Church Programmes for the ecumenical group Churches Together, spoke about her own recent experiences, including a recent visit to Greece where she witnessed the impact of the refugee crisis first-hand.

The Church of England's Martin Kettle, Home Affairs Policy Adviser and Jane Huttly, from the Safeguarding team, talked about some of the work that parishes were already doing and how the diocesan teams could help with guidance on the practical issues of housing and safeguarding vulnerable refugees.

Canon Chris Rich, Director of the diocese's Communities Engagement Team, encouraged parishes, local authorities and aid agencies to keep talking and making a difference and the Revd Canon Dr Andrew Bishop summed up the morning's events by reminding everyone to "go forward and respond to the crisis with PEACE: Pray, Educate, Act, Campaign and Engage.

For the latest information on the Diocese of Guildford's response to the refugee crisis please visit [www.cofeguildford.org.uk/refugees](http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/refugees)

### Inter Faith Week 2015



A wide array of events are being held this year: open door days at places of worship in many areas; social action projects including collections for local food banks; reflection events such as a 'Space for Peace' at the Vedic Temple in Southampton with dancers, singers and musicians from various faiths; youth-led events such as 3FF Parliamentors led 'Interfaith Summit; tree plantings in a number of cities - this year also a multi faith spring bulb planting at Shenley Park in Hertfordshire; talks on topics from 'welcoming the stranger' to religious freedom to faith in the work place, as well as exhibitions,

competitions, quizzes and special programs of events within particular institutions such as in the Royal Hospital in Truro where the Cornwall Faith Forum will be running a special programme of events.

Details of events registered so far can be found on the Inter Faith Week website: [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org).

If you are planning an event or activity to mark Inter Faith Week, do take a few minutes to register it so that we can give it good profile on the Inter Faith Week website and let the public and the media know about it. There is also a downloadable pdf form for those who prefer that and if you would like help, just ring and one of our Inter Faith Week volunteers will be happy to help!

Facebook posts about the Week are proving popular. Check out and 'like' our Facebook Page at: [www.facebook.com/IFWeek](http://www.facebook.com/IFWeek) so do take a look and 'Like' the page. If you are using Facebook or Twitter in ways linked to your Inter Faith Week events or activities, please do connect with us. The FB link is above and we are on Twitter @IFWeek and using the hashtag #IFWeek.

For events taking place in Surrey please see page 7 onwards of this newsletter.

### Tunisian beach attack survivor to help deepen interfaith links

A SURREY MAN who survived the 2015 beach attack in Tunisia has spoken of his desire to deepen interfaith understanding as a result of his experience, and says he felt compelled to say 'thank you' to God as 'so many things added up'. Colin Bidwell, from Windlesham, was on holiday at the al-Sousse resort with his wife when the attack took place, which saw the death of 38 tourists. Since returning from Tunisia, Colin has visited his local church and mosque to meet with leaders and discuss issues and questions around the motives behind the attack carried out by gunman Seifeddine Rezgui, who many sources had linked to Islamic extremist groups.

Colin recalled that he and his wife were relaxing on sun-loungers outside their hotel when Rezgui began shooting. In the aftermath of the attack, Colin, who says that he was raised as a Christian but is not a regular churchgoer, said "I don't know if God saved us, but so many little things add up to us still being here today that I can't ignore the possibility."

After returning home, Colin and his wife attended some services at their local church, St John the Baptist in Windlesham, and were welcomed by the Revd Jonathan Hillman, who said: "Our hope is that as they share in our worship they will become increasingly aware of God's presence surrounding the Bidwells, enabling them to take the next steps on their road of healing. Such an experience as theirs can raise many questions and as Christ's body we are here to walk every step of the journey with them."

Colin also went to Shah Jahan Mosque - the UK's oldest purpose built Mosque - in Woking and met with the Imam, Hafiz Hashmi, who talked through some of his questions and fears. Imam Hashmi said: "I would like to show them the true side of Islam, not the one they experienced on the beach that day."



Colin Bidwell with Imam Hashmi

Colin said: "I have lots of friends who are Muslims, but I don't know much about Islam. Understanding more about other people's faiths might help to stop something like this happening again. Even if I can change just one person's negative stereotype then it has been worth it."

On November 18, during National Interfaith Week, Colin Bidwell will attend Woking People of Faith's event 'Values of culture and faith: The challenges of integrating in society whilst retaining our identity' (Page 7) at which the Bishop of Guildford and Baroness Warsi will speak. Colin will share his story at Woking Debates 'Why do people become terrorists?' (Page 10) on January 9, 2016, with Kevin Hurley, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey.

### Who are you sharing Christmas with?

Christmas is a busy time of year, celebrating and spending time with family and friends. However, we know that this time of year can be difficult for some in our communities. They may be lonely – separated from family and friends, or vulnerable for other reasons. We know that many of these people are supported by you at this time and we would like to compile a directory of support that is available in your local communities over the Christmas period.

We would again like to compile an information sheet so that others are aware of any support being offered over the Christmas period to those in your community who are lonely or vulnerable? Are you / do you know anywhere holding: a Christmas lunch?, running social activities, do you have an opportunity for volunteers to help run an event during the Christmas period? We would be grateful if you would share your plans with us, please get in touch with brief details of what is taking place. Once the list has been compiled I'll share the information with you, so that we can all have a resource to enable us to offer assistance over this period.

Please contact Emma Beswick, E: [Emma.Beswick@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Emma.Beswick@cofeguildford.org.uk)  
Communities Engagement Team, Diocese of Guildford.

### Invitation to discuss Community Health Care Services in Surrey

#### Community Health Services for the future

NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in Surrey and Surrey County Council are seeking views about NHS funded community health care services.

We are holding events in Surrey to which everyone is invited as your opinions will help shape these services and what they offer in the future. The outcomes from this public engagement activity will help shape community healthcare services and what they offer in the future. At the engagement events, there will be the opportunity to meet healthcare professionals and clinical commissioning group staff. They want to know what experiences everyone has had of community healthcare services and what suggestions there are for refining these in the future.

There are more than fifty different community healthcare services in the county. These include children's services – such as health visitors, school nursing and services for children with complex needs; and adult's services - such as community nursing, rapid response services to keep older people out of hospital, physiotherapy, podiatry and adult rehabilitation therapies.

Please see below details of the next event:

Date: 10th November

Time: 6.30pm – 8.00pm

Location: Godalming Masonic Hall, Ockford Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1RQ

Register by: 6th November

Anybody wishing to attend an event can register by emailing [community.services@nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk](mailto:community.services@nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk) with the following details: Your name, Date of event, The community health service you use (if applicable)

Please ensure that the title of the email contains the event date.

We are also asking everybody who uses community healthcare services to express their views, opinions and suggestions through an online survey which can be accessed here ([www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk/improvingcommunityservicesinsurrey](http://www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk/improvingcommunityservicesinsurrey)). More detail about community healthcare services in Surrey is also available at this link. Deadline for the survey is 27th November 2015.

#### Faith & Belief news from 3 Faiths Forum:

- [Nadiya Hussain has won so much more than the Great British Bake Off](#)
- [Europe's moral panic about the migrant Muslim 'other'](#)
- [Pork or nothing: how school dinners are dividing France](#)
- [Religious freedom facing increased threats, US report finds](#)
- [In Praise of Pope Francis: A Muslim Perspective](#)
- [Jewish-Muslim women's network is launched with government support](#)
- [Thor and his followers come to the Northern California hills](#)
- [At 13 I found sanctuary in Britain, now we're failing refugee children](#)



### One Winter Health Plan and Winter Wellness Toolkit

We're delighted to announce a great piece of partnership working where local organisations have come together with a single communications plan to prepare for winter and help keep residents well, warm and safe. Members of Surrey's Health and Wellbeing Board communications group and providers of care and emergency services are running a winter wellness campaign to help residents at risk access support and information as early as possible.

The campaign started in October and runs through to March 2016 and link with the national NHS campaign, Stay Well This Winter, targeting residents with long term conditions, over 65s, parents with children under 5, carers and pregnant women. The aim is to avoid preventable admissions to hospital and reduce strain on care services.

A Winter Wellness toolkit has been developed to support the key messages of this campaign. The toolkit is for professionals and information providers to help in consistently signposting residents to support, available on: <http://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/your-health/seasonal-advice/winter-wellness-toolkit/>

For more information visit

<http://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/your-health/seasonal-advice>

If you have queries, comments or feedback regarding the Winter Wellness Toolkit only please contact Niamh Kelleher, Project Officer, Adult Social Care Communications and Engagement Team, [niamh.kelleher@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:niamh.kelleher@surreycc.gov.uk)

NHS North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group

58 Church Street, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8DP

Tel: 01372 232516

Web: [www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk)

Email: [Adele.Shields@nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk](mailto:Adele.Shields@nwsurreyccg.nhs.uk)

Health and  
Wellbeing  
Surrey

### Drive into Action

Each year Surrey's voluntary car schemes help thousands of elderly and vulnerable people across the county to access hospital appointments, collect prescriptions and to enjoy social events. Each one is run by local volunteers for the benefit of their communities, by providing lifts for those who may not have easy access to transport.

As the population ages, and as cuts impact on local transport services and result in the centralisation of health services, demand for the service provided by voluntary car schemes is increasing year on year but the number of volunteer drivers is falling in Surrey.

Becoming a volunteer driver is easy and volunteers can give as much or as little time as they choose, as well as decide the days and times during which they are available. In return, volunteers are rewarded with the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping elderly neighbours to live independently for longer.

For more information please visit: [www.driveintoaction.com](http://www.driveintoaction.com) or contact Vicki Turton at Surrey Community Action on 01483 447121 or email [vickit@surreyca.org.uk](mailto:vickit@surreyca.org.uk).



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### First Steps Programme

The Faith Based Regeneration Network, in partnership with Locality, the Community Development Foundation and others has launched a new programme of support for local community action, funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government, called 'First Steps'. The programme will initially be working to support at least 115 local neighbourhoods or areas to work collaboratively in their communities to create a community action plan by March 2016. Grants of up to £2,500 are available to assist community groups in putting together their first plan. The Starter Pack and Guidance Notes can be downloaded from <http://cdf.org.uk/content/funding-programmes/first-steps>.

### Comic Relief Stronger Communities Grants

Comic Relief's grants programme now has five themes, one of which is 'Stronger Communities'. Grants for the Stronger Communities theme are managed by Local Community Foundations and range in size from £1,000 to £10,000 per year. Priority is given to small, locally-based groups or organisations in areas of disadvantage that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community and are undertaking actions as a means of addressing these needs. Anyone wishing to apply for a Local Communities grant should contact their local community foundation. Further details can be found online at [http://ukcommunityfoundations.org/programmes/comic\\_relief/](http://ukcommunityfoundations.org/programmes/comic_relief/).

### Heritage Lottery Fund grants to commemorate First World War

The Heritage Lottery Fund has made an additional £4million of funding available so that more communities can get involved in projects marking the Centenary of the First World War. Projects applying for funding must be able to meet one of a number of successful outcomes based on heritage, people and communities. Grants can be given between £3,000 and £10,000. There is no current deadline for applications. Further information can be found at <https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/first-world-war-then-and-now>.

### Near Neighbours Programme

The Near Neighbours programme, a partnership between the Church Urban Fund and the Archbishops' Council, awards small grants of between £250 and £5,000 to projects that enable people of different faiths or none to work together for the benefit of the community. This is a rolling programme with no deadlines available in certain parts of England (maps showing eligible areas can be found at <http://www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours/grants/eligible-areas>).

Its second phase is due to run until December 2015.

Details on eligibility and how to apply can be found online at <http://www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours/grants>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



Guildford & Godalming Interfaith Forum will be having their annual multi-faith event titled: 'Freedom, Rights and Responsibilities' on 15th November to celebrate Interfaith Week. This will take place at St. Nicolas Parish Room, Millmead, Bury Street, Guildford, GU2 4AW at 3.00p.m.

The interfaith service will begin with a devotional Hindu dance followed by readings from Ray Spiers - Judaism, Nigel Harte - Buddhism, Sarah Gall - Christianity, Kauser Hashmi - Islám, Bahadur Singh - Sikhism and Carolyn Neogi - Baha'í.

The Mayor of Guildford Cllr Nikki Nelson-Smith & Mayor of Godalming Cllr Anne Bott will both be taking part. We look forward to welcoming people of all Faiths for an afternoon of fellowship.

For more information please contact Bernard Jones E: [bernard.jones10@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard.jones10@btinternet.com), T: 01483 424257 or Carolyn Neogi E: [carolynneogi@aol.com](mailto:carolynneogi@aol.com), T: 01483 415773

### A FREE Prevention Through Education Project workshop

Protect your premises: Crime Prevention - Fire Risk Assessments - Premises Licensing  
The training is being run by Surrey Community Action, Surrey Police and Surrey Fire, Rescue Service, Woking Borough Council and various District and Borough Councils around Surrey throughout the year

- 18th Nov 2015 Compton Village Hall, Waverley area
- 8th Dec 2015 Long Ditton Village Hall, Elmbridge area
- 19th Jan 2016 Dorking area
- 23rd Feb 2016 Guildford area

All trustees, volunteers and regular hirers of a community or religious building should be encouraged to come on the training. If you would like more information or to register please contact Karen Holdsworth-Cannon, Community Buildings Advisor, Surrey Community Action, Guildford, GU4 7BR, Email: [karenh@surreyca.org.uk](mailto:karenh@surreyca.org.uk)

On the occasion of National Interfaith Week and in light of the mass movement of people into Europe, Woking People of Faith warmly invites you to join

#### Baroness Warsi

(Lawyer, businesswoman, cabinet minister)

#### Rt Revd Andrew Watson

(Bishop of Guildford)

In considering '**Valuing Culture and Faith; the challenges of integrating in society whilst retaining our identity**'

Wednesday 18th November 2015, 7 – 9.30pm. H.G. Wells Centre, Woking.

Three course meal included. Tickets only £5

BOOKING ESSENTIAL – Places limited



Woking People of Faith

To reserve a place please visit the eventbrite link <http://wpof-event.eventbrite.com>

Each attendee MUST register prior to the event. If an individual purchases multiple tickets, they need to register unique names for all attendees. Nobody will be permitted to enter the event unless their name appears on the registration list.

For further information, please contact Pippa Ross McCabe: [coordinator@wpof.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@wpof.org.uk)



**Refugee Crisis  
Epsom & Ewell community response**

Public meeting hosted by local churches and the Epsom & Ewell Food Bank

Date: 18th November, 7.30pm

Venue: King's Church, Longmead Road, KT19 9BU

Address by Alastair Murray from Housing Justice

Parking & refreshments available

An open invitation to consider our town's response to the refugee crisis. This will be of particular interest to the residents of Epsom & Ewell, but is open to anyone from here or elsewhere, of any faith or no faith.

All are welcome.

What could we offer as a community should the need arise? Some of that support might take the form of council action, church or mosque action, or the action of individuals working together or alone. The precise needs in Epsom & Ewell have yet to be identified. We are aware refugees may come here with varied and complex problems. Any assistance we offer must be more holistic and imaginative than merely a bed and a roof. Epsom was recently named "the most courteous town in the UK". Let's extend that courtesy to some of the most troubled people on the planet.

We aim to identify both needs and solutions.

Contact:

Jonathan Lees, Generation Church: [jonathan@generation.org.uk](mailto:jonathan@generation.org.uk), 020 8786 8221

David Waddell, Epsom Baptist Church: [waddelldj@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:waddelldj@yahoo.co.uk), 07803 923778

**Diocesan Day on Prayer 2015**

Dr Jane Williams

Why pray when God knows already?

Author, theologian and lecturer, as well as Archbishop's wife, Jane will address the challenges prayer poses to all of us. There will be an opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

Date: Saturday 21st November 2015, Time: 10am - 1pm

Venue: St Paul's, Camberley, GU15 2AD

£5 suggested donation on the door, Open to Everyone

For more information please contact Revd Sarah Hutton, Spiritual Growth Facilitator

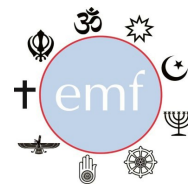
E: [sarah.hutton@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:sarah.hutton@cofeguildford.org.uk)





**Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum Events**

'Annual Gala Evening' on Saturday, **28th November 2015** at 7 for 7.30pm at the Grenfell Centre, Claremont Fancourt School, Claremont, Cobham, KT11 2JL KT10. Superb buffet supper and intercultural entertainment. A donation of £15 per person would be thankfully appreciated to help offset costs. (please make cheques payable to Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum)



For more information about EMF events/ activities please contact Geoffrey Morris

E: [geoffreymorris@emas-bc.co.uk](mailto:geoffreymorris@emas-bc.co.uk) or T: 01932 868454

**ST DUNSTAN'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAIR**

Saturday, 28th November 2015, 12:30pm to 2:30pm  
Shaftesbury Road, Woking, GU22 7DT

In support of: St Vincent de Paul and Rainbow Trust & NW Surrey Samaritans

1st Prize £500

2nd Prize £250

3rd Prize £75

Tombola, delicious cakes, books, toys, DVD's, face and henna painting, gifts, jewellery and Santa's grotto.

**In Our Time! Changing Christian Views of the Jews**

Tuesday 24 November at 8 pm

Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, Gresham Road, Staines, TW18 2B

It was in October 1965 that the Catholic Church published its declaration on its relations with other faiths, *Nostra Aetate - In Our Time*. Most significantly for Jewish-Christian understanding was the repudiation of the ancient accusation against Jews as Christ-killers.



Dr Jane Clements has played a leading role in interfaith relations for many years and is national director of CCJ

Dr Jane Clements, who is an Anglican with many years of experience of inter faith relations and education, will reflect on the changes in hearts and minds that have followed from it

For more information:

Tel: 01252 622978

E: [ccjstaines@gmail.com](mailto:ccjstaines@gmail.com)

No entry charge. We invite donations towards CCJ's work

**An event for Inter Faith Week**



[www.ccj.org.uk/staines](http://www.ccj.org.uk/staines)

The Council of Christians and Jews is a registered charity, 238005

## **A Rabbi, A Vicar and an Imam Walk Into a Comedy Club**

Part of the UK Jewish Comedy Festival

What's the role of comedy in religion, and is it ever really funny? We've thrown three UK based faith leaders into the spotlight. After working with Stand-Up and teacher Cynthia Levin, come and be part of this hallowed congregation to hear three very special stand-up sets, from – you've guessed it – A Rabbi, A Vicar and an Imam. This will be followed by a panel discussion on the process of writing stand-up and the place of comedy in each faith.

Sunday 29th November at 5.00 pm

For more information or to book please visit:

<https://www.jw3.org.uk/event/rabbi-vicar-and-imam-walk-comedy-club>

Voluntary Action in Spelthorne would like to invite you to join them at the

## **22nd VAIS AGM and Community Engagement Event**

Tuesday 24th November 2015 in the Council Chamber, Spelthorne Borough Council Offices, starting at 10:30am – 12:15pm (registration at 10:15am), followed by refreshments.

The Community Engagement Event is themed 'Homelessness and support services within the borough and surrounding areas'. VAIS has therefore, invited the following Keynote Speakers:

- Steve Moore, Area Manager, Surrey North and Sutton, Transform Housing & Support
- Jonathan Scarth, Regional Manager, Tina Millhouse, Senior Project Worker, and Debbie Adams, Peer Advice Link Volunteer, from St. Mungo's Broadway
- Karen Sinclair and Deborah Ashman, Head of Housing and Independent Living, Spelthorne Borough Council

Deputy Mayor of Spelthorne, Cllr Alfred Friday and the Deputy Mayoress of Spelthorne, Mrs Kaye Friday will also attend the event.

The closing address will be given by Kwasi Kwarteng, Member of Parliament for Spelthorne.

For further information and to register your place please email: [info@vais.org.uk](mailto:info@vais.org.uk) or call 01784 465536 including:

your full name, job title, organisation, contact telephone number and email of each delegate wishing to attend.

## **Woking Debates at Christ Church, Woking from 11.00 am—12.30 pm**

9 January: How do we prevent people becoming terrorists? Kevin Hurley and another speaker TBC

13 February: How sustainable can Woking become? Speakers to be finalised.

12 March: Water (title to be agreed) David Charters and son

9 April: Is Woking an integrated community? Kauser Akhtar and another speaker TBC

18 June: Refugees? What have they got to do with us? Speakers to be finalised.



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