

# CHURCHES TOGETHER IN FARNHAM

## December 2015 E-News

*Please publicise the items below - and forward to editors for inclusion in church magazines, newsletters and service sheets. Also let us know about YOUR forthcoming events and activities - email to [web@ct-farnham.org.uk](mailto:web@ct-farnham.org.uk)*

**Dear Church Leaders, CTF Representatives, Associates and other Friends**

In the midst of all the Christmas preparations I would like to draw your attention to the notice about Syrian refugees below.

Following that is another wonderful compilation of news and events courtesy of Mary Clarke - do give it a read!

With very best wishes to you all for the festive season.

**Andrew Partridge - Secretary, Churches Together in Farnham**

### NOTICES -

**CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH FOR ANYONE WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE ALONE.** If you know of someone who is expecting to be on their own this Christmas, please make sure that they receive an invitation. Guests of any age will be warmly welcomed to traditional Christmas Lunch at the Gostrey Centre at 1pm on Christmas Day. Everything is free, including transport, if required. **To book a place**, ring: Michael McDonnell 01252 712600 or Margaret Skinner 01252 329976 as soon as possible.

**Volunteers:** If you are able to help please contact: Jo Rendall on 01252 737162/ [joanna.rendall@btclick.com](mailto:joanna.rendall@btclick.com) as soon as possible and before Friday 11th December. [Full details and posters for your noticeboard are on the CTF website.](#)

**SYRIAN REFUGEES ARRIVING IN SURREY.** The Revd Lesley Crawley (joint Rector of Badshot Lea and Hale Parish) relays the following information from Guildford Diocese:

"The first group of refugees to arrive in the diocese under the resettlement programme will come directly from the refugee camps in Lebanon in early December, and more will be arriving soon after Christmas. This group is formed of four families, each with young children – 7 little girls, and a boy of 3 years, and a baby expected very soon.

"The diocesan team are liaising with the county and borough councils to help support the families, who have been through a strict vetting process. Although they have housing allocated to them, they will have very few possessions." There may be an urgent need for certain household items, toys and winter clothing – *but none of these things should be given at this stage.*

"Additional ongoing needs are: **Housing:** social landlords with two or three bedroom properties; **Storage space;** and **Teachers of English as a Second Language.** If you can supply any of these, please contact [Diane Peters: diane.peters@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:diane.peters@cofeguildford.org.uk).

"For now we will keep a list of offers to match specific needs, so **please do not bring any items until requested.** We will update you as needs change."

**VIGIL FOR THE SYRIA CRISIS.** At last week's Vigil service at St Andrew's Church, Laura Mead of Christian Aid spoke movingly of the plight of refugees in the border camps and the desperate need for funds to provide them with basic necessities. Go to Christian Aid website to donate or for more information. *Also see Christian Aid event at Farnham URC on 12th December in [DAIRY](#) below.*

**TWO FAITHS TO SHARE MESSAGE OF PEACE.** Local Muslims and Christians will speak about peace in their respective religions and pray for peace at Farnham United Reformed Church on 10th December. See details in **DIARY** below.

**ADVENT JOURNEY FOR 'KNITIVITY' SET.** Needles have been clicking apace across Badshot Lea and Hale as a host of knitters created the parish's first ever 'Knitivity' set. Now Mary and Joseph, kings, shepherds and a multitude of sheep, forming this special knitted Nativity set, are touring homes, offices, schools and shops throughout the parish. They are staying at a different home each night of Advent, and at each of these homes one sheep is left behind - until finally the whole set will be reunited at services at St John's, St George's and St Mark's on Christmas Day.

**UNITED SERVICE FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.** A reminder that the **2016 Unity Service will be held at St Joan of Arc's Church by kind invitation of the Revd Fr Niven Richardson on Sunday 24th January.** Please put the date in your 2016 diary and encourage everyone in your congregation to attend. There will also be daily ecumenical prayer meetings throughout Unity Week - 18th to 25th January. The 2016 theme is 'Salt of the Earth' and stems from the Christian churches of Latvia. More details in January E-News.

**'SPIRITUAL BUT NOT RELIGIOUS BOOK CLUB'.** – After the first meeting, thoroughly enjoyed by those who came, the club will be meeting again at The Rectory, 25 Upper Hale Road, Hale on 21st January to discuss “The Year of Magical Thinking” by Joan Didion.

**DIARY** - Some special events in the next few weeks. Go to the CTF website [www.churchestogether.org/farnham](http://www.churchestogether.org/farnham) for more details of these and other church events, including posters to download for your noticeboard.

**Wednesday 2nd till Sunday 6th December - St Andrew's Church, Farnham – Christmas Tree Festival** – exciting display by more than 60 exhibitors – traditional and modern designs, trees small and big, in many colours - music throughout the day and refreshments available – entrance free. Opening times – Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9.30am till 5pm; Thursday 9.30am till 7pm; Sunday 12 noon till 5pm.

**Saturday 5th December – St Thomas-on The Bourne Church – 10am till 12.30pm – Christmas Market for Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice.** £3 entrance includes refreshments.

**Saturday 5th December – 7.30pm – St Mark 's Church, Upper Hale - Farnham Town Crier Jonathan Jones' dramatised reading of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' to help save 'Emily' the pipe organ.** Admission free with retiring collection for 'Emily' fund. Named after her benefactor, Emily Mangles, 'Emily' is a beautiful Edwardian pipe organ but, at just over 100 years old, she is in need of a complete overhaul.

**Sunday 6th December – 3pm – Farnham Methodist Church (note change of venue) – Vivaldi Singers Celebrate the Glory of Christmas** – a feast of traditional and contemporary Christmas music. Tickets available from Vivaldi Singers website or on the door: adults £10; under 16s £5; under 5s free.

**Monday 7th December – 3pm – Farnham Baptist Church - Farnham ASSIST Christmas Carol Service** - with tea, coffee and mince pies after the service. Everyone welcome. Phil Sweeting, Assistant Minister of Farnham Baptist Church will be speaking during the service which will be attended by Farnham Town Mayor, Cllr Pat Frost.

**Wednesday 9th December - 7.30pm - St Thomas on the Bourne Church - Voices Together and the Basingstoke Hospital Male Voice Choir.** No tickets but a retiring collection for Farnham ASSIST.

**Thursday 10th December – 8pm – Farnham United Reformed Church - Love for All - Hatred for None.** An event where representatives of the Muslim and Christian faiths will explain the traditions of peace and love at the heart of both faiths, and will each offer prayers for peace in the light of recent events. Dr Rizwan Ullah Khan, President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK (Islamabad branch) and The Revd Michael Hopkins, Minister of Farnham and Elstead United Reformed Churches. *We offer an open invitation to people of all faiths and none.*

**Friday 11th December - 7.30pm - Farnham Maltings - Rushmoor Oddfellows Male Voice Choir** – Tickets £12 from the Maltings Box Office 01252 745444 with proceeds to Farnham ASSIST.

**Friday 11th December – 7.30pm – Alton Abbey – Concert of Advent Music by the Rose Belles.** Tickets £15 from Friends of Alton Abbey, Abbey Rd, Alton, GU34 4AP, enclosing SAE & phone number or email address. Phone 01420 562126 or email [friendsofaltonabbey@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofaltonabbey@gmail.com) for more details.

**Saturday 12th December – 3pm and 6.30pm – All Saints Church, Tilford - Tilford Bach Society Carol Concerts.** The afternoon concert includes performances by children from All Saints Infants School and Waverley Abbey School. Both concerts include performances by the Haslemere Singing Studio and seasonal readings, plus carols for all. The evening concert includes excerpts from Bach's Christmas Oratorio and performances by Tilford Bach Choir. **Both concerts are free** as are the accompanying mince pies & mulled wine.

**Saturday 12th December - Farnham United Reformed Church – Souper Soup and Carols Day for Christian Aid. The Spire Cafe, open from 10am till 2pm,** will be donating today's proceeds to Christian Aid, focussed on prevention of the malaria scourge. In addition there will be an **all-day collection outside the church plus carol singing from 2pm to 3.30pm** for Christian Aid causes which include basic help for displaced Syrian families struggling to survive in crowded refugee camps. If you would like to sing or rattle a bucket - please contact Karen Fewster on 01252 795169.

**Saturday 12th December - 7.30pm - St Andrew's Church, Farnham – Waverley Singers Christmas Concert** - with Christmas readings and audience carols – tickets £15; under 16s & students £5 - see leaflet in church or the choir's website for details. Retiring collection for wateraid.

**Sunday 13th December – 10am till 4pm - Farnham Christmas Market in Castle Street and at Mercure Bush Hotel.** Over 100 stalls, festive fare, gifts, music. **Farnham ASSIST supporters and friends will be singing carols from 11.45am - 12.30pm outside Pizza Express as part of this community event.**

**Saturday 19th December - 7.30pm – St Thomas-on-The Bourne Church - Farnham and Bourne Choral Society Christmas Concert – Bourne Brass Ensemble.** Carols for Choir and Audience. Tickets £13 in advance (see website) or £15 at the door.

**CHRISTMASTIDE** - In the days running up to Christmas, our churches each have their own programme to celebrate the birth of Jesus. **These include Christingles, Lessons and Carols, Crib blessings, Nativity plays and more, culminating in Christmas Midnight Mass and further services of celebration at every church on Christmas morning.** These events are too numerous to list here but please follow links on the CTF website to individual church websites for full details.

**Friday 25th December – 1pm – Gostrey Centre, Farnham – Churches Together in Farnham Christmas Day Lunch for those who would otherwise be on their own.** See **NOTICES** above for details.

***For more about these and other activities, go to the CTF website [www.churchestogether.org/farnham](http://www.churchestogether.org/farnham) where you will also find links to our member churches' and associates' individual websites, with details of services and other activities.***