

ACROSS Newsletter

ACROSS
Sharing Faith Across Cultures

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MAHABBA
LOVING ALL MUSLIMS

Winter Issue / January 2022

The Gate of the Year



What does 2022 hold for Across and cross-cultural ministry in Woking?

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: *"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."* And he replied: *"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."* So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East." - *Minnie Louise Haskins, (cited in George VI's 1939 Christmas message)*

Out with the [#oldyear2021](#) in with the [#newyear2022](#) - Join our prayer breakfast at St Andrews on January 22nd to see where He leads ...

Our refugee family arrives



resetuk.org/about/what-is-community-sponsorship

We stood nervously at Heathrow arrivals just before Christmas, waiting for the refugees we had been working towards welcoming for the past year. "Our" family of four appeared clutching a few bags, one with a guitar slung over his shoulder. What do we say to these people who have been on a list for 8 years and that day has now finally come? They are standing at the threshold of a new life, of peace, certainty and belonging. We blurt out "welcome to England" in our broken Farsi, pile into the van, break open crisps and biscuits and set off for Guildford. Anyone can welcome a refugee family for resettlement, over and above the government's quota, under the government's Community Sponsorship Scheme (see link below) 'Our' family has been swamped with trips to football, bowling, Wintershall; endless trips into town for shopping, and English lessons. They have been overwhelmed by gifts, food parcels, Christmas hospitality and the inevitable maelstrom of visits to the benefits office, job centre, doctors, school, and dentists. I'm sure we will all calm down eventually, the dust will settle and we will reach a happy equilibrium. But above everything, we hope that we will all one day become friends. – **Jane and Andrew**

www.gov.uk/government/news/community-sponsorship-scheme-launched-for-refugees-in-the-uk

75 years young



John Wardill, one of the founders of Across Woking 25 years ago, turns 75 this month. We wish him a blessed birthday and celebrate all that he has brought to the ministry of Across. John & Ann's early ministry included International BBQs in their garden, sharing faith and serving His church in cross cultural ministry for many, many years with trips to Mangolia and Pakistan to help encourage work there and their ongoing ministry in Turkey. John continues to be a friend to all people of all backgrounds. His compassion and heart for the Muslim people in particular, along with his wife Ann, spans many decades and he shows no signs of stopping. John has been a trustee of Across since it's foundation and has used his HR skills to good effect. Just think, John is as old as independent India and Pakistan. Maybe that's why he loves people from the region so much. Many of you will know him & love him as we at Across do. Happy Birthday John!



The theme of this year's **International Carol Service** was

'Tidings of Comfort and Joy'. Last year we met on Zoom this time we met in person about 80 people (all wearing masks) . As usual this reflected the Global mix in Woking, with a variety of input from China, India Pakistan, Armenia, Syria, Malaysia, Nigeria, Kenya, Italy, France Ireland. We also were treated to a wonderful drama/soliloquy by Roubina who spoke as the Innkeeper (she is part of Wintershall) We raised £543.67 which was doubled by Big Gift Foundation ... to £1087 to support the work of Welcome Churches Network and their *'No Refugee Alone'* campaign. Praise the Lord indeed.



INTERNATIONAL CAROL SERVICE
TIDINGS OF COMFORT & JOY
SATURDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2021



	<p>An update on International Student ministry</p> <p>What a pleasure it was to be able to bring a graduate Hindu student to church this Sunday and invite her home for a vegetarian lunch. From her perspective it was an opportunity to immerse herself in British culture, but from my perspective, this was an opportunity for the Lord to meet with her. 'Hosting' international students by inviting them into a Christian home, sharing a meal with them and getting to know them is not radical, it's what Jesus did. If you would like to know more about how to host an international student from the University of Surrey and join the team of volunteers that already do, please email riz.mohammed@friendsinternational.org.uk who would love to tell you more. Why not make a resolution to get involved with FIG and host a student (or 2 or more) this year. You can find out more here: https://www.friendsinternationalguildford.org.uk</p>
	<p>Life Skills Training</p> <p>Jackie Durrant will be running a 9 week CAP Life Skills course at the Moorcroft Centre in Westfield, starting on Tuesday 25th January in the morning. Guests are welcomed to a friendly group where they will discover how to live well on a low income. Topics include: Making money go further; healthy eating on a budget; healthy relationships; and budgeting. To find out more or to refer a client, please contact Jackie: jackiedurrant@caplifefskills.org or 07710 538350. More info can be found here: https://capuk.org/i-want-help/our-services/cap-life-skills/introduction Watch the YouTube intro here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AUN74ZwFaQ</p>
<p>HOPE is FREE</p> 	<p>Sarah in Leicester, who often joins in #JumaaPrayer, shared about the Gideon's publication of Psalms & John's gospel in a colourful magazine format. HOPE is free to order and Sarah says they are distributing them in their village. It's also something you can carry with you (if your handbag is big enough). Maybe this is something we could try in Across? Why not order some magazines to give away to friends and neighbours or ask if they can be left in waiting rooms: doctors/dentists, churches, coffee shops, lounges in OAP homes etc - goodnewsuk.com/hopegospelmagazine - Helping to find hope in the midst of difficult and challenging situations, the free HOPE magazine includes encouraging Scriptures from Psalms and the Gospel of John and many extracts from the Psalms and are presented in an attractive easy to read A4 format with many photos of scenes from around the country.</p>
	<p>*The picture was commissioned by the 2 Guildford Bishops of a refugee mother and child for their Christmas card. This was the winning painting by Deborah in HMP Send - 'an Afghan Madonna'. It has, as Bishop Jo puts it, <i>'the burden of responsibility, the marvel at the gift & the fragility of life all at once.'</i> She continues <i>"It relates to some of the dangers & horrors of the Afghan context and even there to glimpse beauty and hope.'</i></p> <p>A FREE course 'When women speak' is starting up in February for women who want to understand the world of Muslim women's lives in order to share deeper with them https://whenwomenspeak.net/wws-events-notice/2022-dates-for-i-view-courses-term-1/</p> <p>We hope to host our very first Across Prayer Breakfast in person this year with a focus on <i>'The Gate of the Year'</i> looking forward as well as reflecting on what has gone before. The world is changing & so too its impact on us in Woking. As we look to welcome more families relocating to the UK as refugees or asylum seekers, it is our privilege as the church to welcome the stranger: Syrian, Afghan, Hong Konger, whomever</p>
	<p>Here's what's happening:</p> <p>*Matt Vaughan from Mahabba B/ham is preaching at St Johns Church on Sun 30 Jan @ 6:30. You may remember him talking about Pakistan at a zoom prayer b/fast. Why not come and here him live. Riz & Phil will be there flying an Across/Mahabba flag</p> <p>*Regular Monthly Prayer Meeting currently on Zoom (1st Friday of the month at 8pm) – so next are 4th February, 4th March, 1st April</p> <p>*Across Prayer Breakfast – Sat 22 Jan – 8.30am -10am at St Andrews Café Goldsworth Park. Theme: <i>'I stood at the Gate of the Year'</i></p> <p>#JumaaPrayer on every Friday at 12 Noon praying for Mahabba and Muslim friends Please contact Riz at acrosswokingoffice@gmail.com for Zoom details</p>

'Sharing Faith Across Cultures'

'Cross Cultural Ministry in Woking' (Across) is a registered Charity (1106905) and exists *'to see people of all backgrounds become disciples of Jesus Christ'* Across is formed by 10 churches working together and is based at St Andrews Church, Goldsworth Park, GU21 3LG.

Contact: Riz, the ACROSS Co-ordinator at acrosswokingoffice@gmail.com
Across is part of the Mahabba Network www.mahabbanetwork.com

'Cross cultural ministry in Woking'