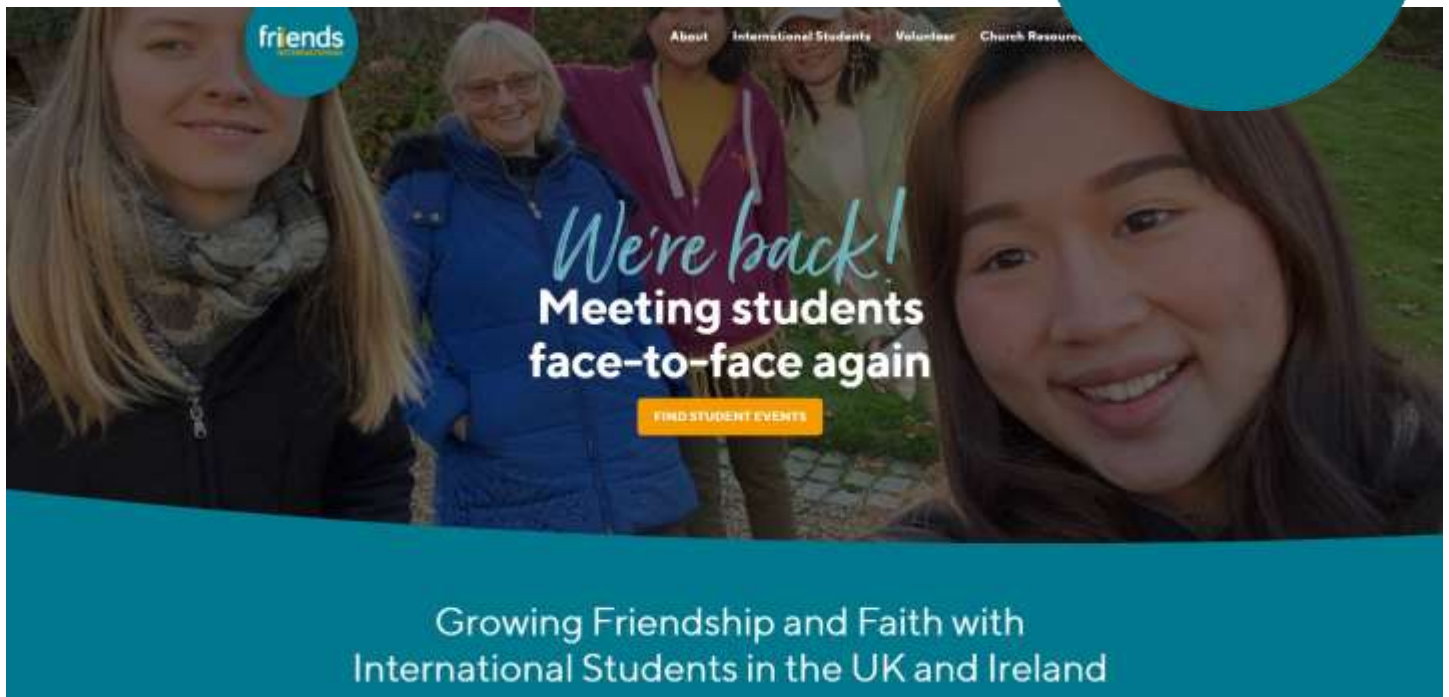




My walk with Friends International—Shelagh Godwin

“Hi, Shelagh, I’m S from Shanghai and I am ringing to wish you a very happy Christmas. And, you know, I’m married now!”

I received this call on Christmas Day 2020, but it wasn’t the first time I’d heard from S on Christmas Day. Some years ago, when she was a student at the University of Surrey, we entertained her to lunch, had a great time, and within a few weeks she was back at her own request to cook us a full-scale Chinese meal for many more people than we had round the table!

Such generosity happens when you get involved in Friends International. Jim and I have had the privilege over 22 years of hosting students from all manner of countries, ranging from Nigeria to India and Kuwait, but the majority have come from mainland China. Just now, with COVID, this hosting isn’t possible. But many things are. Friends International Guildford (FIG) have arranged many on-line events from regular

social meetings for women, cooking parties, English Conversation courses, on-line cafes, to name but a few. These are instead of the lively coffee mornings, barbecues, firework displays with an explanatory talk, Christmas Lights switch-on which cannot happen at the moment. The idea is to introduce international students to British culture, traditions, and the hope is in time to introduce them gently to the reality of the Lord Jesus. One thing you can guarantee, we make a lot of friends!

Last Christmas, when socializing was severely restricted, many students were left isolated on the campus. Lovely as the campus is, that can get lonely. Volunteers and staff from Friends International Guildford stepped forward and offered free hot drinks



and many Christmas presents and goodies donated by kind people. And some are offering to do socially-distanced, one-to-one walks with students who would like to get out. And in these situations, conversations can start.

Want to get involved? Contact Riz and express your interest: she'll be delighted to hear from you.

(riz.mohammed@friendsinternational.uk)

Even if you cannot get out, it is possible to pray at the regular prayer meetings on the last Saturday of the month. Want to dip your toe in a bit further? I volunteered to mentor a student at a course (again on-line) which teaches students how to expound the truths of the Bible to those in an international situation, and I myself am finding the course enormously stimulating. **Shelagh Godwin, OG Group**

Give

Donate and support international students

MORE

Pray

Become a prayer partner today

MORE

Volunteer

Get involved in our network of hosts

MORE

OUTWARD GIVING

Our role is to provide a bridge between our church and its members, mission and the groups we support and pray for.
See bhcgodalming.com/mission/outward-giving

If you would like to be involved in this group or would like to find out more about our bursary scheme for short mission projects, please contact mission@bhcgodalming.org

4 WAYS TO GIVE

1. By BACS transfer:
Bank: NatWest, Godalming Branch
Sort Code: 60-09-04
Account name: **Busbridge PCC**
Account no: 00705349 | Ref: **A Rocha UK**
2. www.bhcgodalming.org/giving
3. Cheque payable to Busbridge PCC. Please use the giving envelope available from both churches!
4. The GoodBox contactless card reader at Busbridge Church. Donations made via the Goodbox during and over Easter, Harvest and Christmas will go to OG Appeal.



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