



THE FRIENDS OF ST JOHN'S CHURCH, CARDIFF

(Registered Charity 1066605)

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NEWSLETTER

May 2016

Dear Friend,

Spring is busy season for the church. During this time there are the major events of Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost. This has meant a lot of extra activity on top of the usual run of Sunday and weekday services. There were two separate Lent courses, Tuesday daytimes and Wednesday evenings, The additional services for Lent, holy Week and Easter were held. On important festivals, the usual Sunday evening service of Evensong was replaced by a service of readings and music, not unlike the Lessons and Carols of Christmas. This activity has brought new people into the church, and strengthened our congregations. Particularly, there has been significant growth in the Wednesday worship. All of this has kept our Priest-in-Charge Canon Sarah very busy. Now we are starting the somewhat quieter summer season, giving us an opportunity to recharge our batteries.

IN NEED OF REPAIRS.

Our church, being an ancient and historic building is constantly in need of repairs. Recently, a number of smaller jobs have been needed, not major, but nevertheless essential. In a building such as our church, even small jobs can cost a lot, because the work has to be done to the highest standard. In the last newsletter you will have read of the problem with the west window. Mortar used to repair it thirty or so years ago was cracking and falling off, so work was in hand to make a proper repair in stone. This work has now been completed. Some minor work was also needed in the toilet area for health and safety reasons. There was a problem with the door at the top of the tower, that leads onto the roof. It's frame was coming away from the stonework. A replacement door and frame has now been fitted to make it safe, though more work may be needed later to complete the job. In addition there was some repair needed to various parts of the church including the organ when intruders broke in during the night a few weeks ago. It was distressing, but no damage was caused that can't be repaired. The Friends have been able to assist in a number of these things by giving grants to the church.

PEW CUSHIONS

In the last newsletter I reported that new pew cushions had been put into the pews in the front part of the church, paid for by a grant from the Friends. The church was looking for sponsors for matching cushions for the rest of the pews in the central block. It is pleasing to report that all the cushions have now been sponsored, so the congregation can look forward to their arrival soon.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE VESTRY BLOCK.

Anyone who has been in the church will know the internal vestry block in the south aisle. This was installed in the 1960's to provide the church with extra facilities that were needed at the time. For instance, until this was built, the church did not have a toilet or proper handwash basin. Although it suited the needs of the time, its uses have changed. Today its main use is as the Tea sPot tearoom, although neither the room nor the kitchen were designed for this purpose, and have to share its use with the choir, Sunday School, general meeting room, and changing room for visiting choirs and performers. There is also a lack of small rooms for private prayer and discussions, group meetings and so on.

An opportunity has arisen with funds from the sale of St James's church on Newport Road for substantial finance to become available, although there is a time limit on this. This funding is specifically for the development of church buildings in the parish. A steering committee has been formed and a congregational meeting held to look at and discuss how these funds can best be used to improve our church buildings, for our own use and to enhance out ministry in our parish. The church is our only parish building, and both its grade 1 historic listing and its very restricted site limits what can be done. The prime option is probably remodelling or complete rebuilding of the vestry block to meet the needs of the new century. Other possibilities are also being explored, and the matter is still open for discussion, so any ideas and input are welcomed. If you have any thoughts to contribute, please contact Canon Sarah.

PARISH OUTING

The outing this year is on Saturday 16th July and will be for a ride on the Brecon Mountain railway, followed by a visit to the Llangasty retreat centre on the shores of Llangorse lake, for Evnsong in their chapel, and tea. The railway has a gift shop and cafe at Pant station and a cafe, picnic area and steam museum at Pontsticill. You might prefer to bring a picnic to enjoy when the train halts at Pontsticill. Toilets are available at both locations and the railway is user friendly for the disabled. The outing will begin from Tredegarville School in Glossop Road, Cardiff in the morning, returning there by early evening after a day travelling through beautiful countryside.

The cost of the day to include travel, train ride, tea at Llangasty and driver's gratuity is £23 for pensioners and £24 for younger people. The cost for children is £19. This relates to the charge for the train ride. If you would like to come, please contact Pauline Grainger (029 2056 8907) for information and bookong, or to add your name to the list at the back of the church.

Richard Hall, (Hon.Sec.)