



## THE FRIENDS OF ST JOHN'S CHURCH, CARDIFF

(Registered Charity 1066605)

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### NEWSLETTER

January 2019

Dear Friend,

Greetings for 2019. Our new Priest-in-Charge, Revd. Sarah Jones, who was licensed to the parish last October has settled in and is proving an able preacher and pastor. With any new person there are bound to be changes, but she has taken a gentle approach, not trying to move too far too quickly, and holding on to what is good about St John's while seeking to advance its ministry. One of the best things about our church is its sense of fellowship, supported by both its congregation and by the Friends. The church faces a number of challenges, particularly in relation to maintenance and development of the building, and to the life of the city centre around it. Strong support is vital to the advancement of its role in the 21st century. We still hear occasional news of our last parish priest, Sarah Rowland Jones, who is now doing well as Dean of St David's Cathedral.

#### **FRIENDS AUTUMN LUNCHEON.**

The Late Autumn Luncheon last year returned to its former venue of the New House Hotel at Thornhill. It was attended almost to the capacity of the room, and certainly seems more popular than the Cornerstone in the city centre. It is intended to use the New House again this coming autumn. With good food in pleasant surroundings, and once again a light hearted quiz between the tables, it was much enjoyed by all who attended.

#### **ADVENT, CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY.**

Our new priest had little time to move in before the St John's Christmas season was upon us, keeping everyone busy. Once again there were all the usual activities. Cards for Good Causes were again in church from mid-October until a week or so before Christmas. The Cytun Christmas Crib scene was on display outside at the base of the tower. There were many carol services and carol concerts by outside organisations, and our own seasonal worship. As in the last few years there were a Shoppers' Carol Service and Lutheran German Carols each Saturday, our Advent Carols by Candlelight, the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols, and Christmas services including "Midnight Mass". There were many visitors to these services, which we warmly welcome. There was also a special service to mark the Epiphany, when we recall the visit of the Wise Men to visit the infant Jesus.

## **PROBLEMS WITH THE BUILDING**

It was mentioned in an earlier newsletter that our heating boiler was nearing the end of its life. It had been hoped to get a new one installed before the autumn, but the new modern installation required some minor structural alteration of the building. Because of delays with the tendering process and getting the necessary permissions for the work, this was not achieved. Unfortunately, the old boiler packed in after less than a month. As an emergency measure, temporary domestic type boiler has been fitted to keep the chill off over the winter. A proper replacement system is still to be installed, and it is intended to get on with the work as soon as the weather is warmer and we can manage without the heating for a few weeks. All this, though, is quite costly, and the church will welcome contributions.

A more serious problem is the state of the tower. Last year, small fragments of stone fell off it. An inspection confirmed that it was a surface problem, not a structural one, but would need attention in the near future. Because of the height of the tower, even minor repairs will be very expensive, and the church officers will be looking at ways to raise the necessary finance. This is likely to involve finding funding from external sources.

## **BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS.**

The Vestry Block project has made slower progress than we had hoped, and to outside observers maybe no progress at all. But a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes in preparing detailed plans and specifications as required to make applications for a faculty, other permissions, and tendering. It is hoped to move forward in this respect in the next couple of months. This does though leave open the problem of funding the development. It is clear that the money from the sale of St James's church will at best cover only about half the cost. Substantial grants will be needed if the project is to come to fruition. We are looking around for potential sources, and also how best to present our case to bodies that may come up with funds. This is a difficult process, and it could take some time. Until we can be certain of funding, we can't start placing contracts for the work. So it will require some patience and hard work before we get to a stage where things can begin to happen.

## **SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER**

For those that subscribe annually, the subscription for 2019 is now due. A remittance form is enclosed for your use. The rates are the same as last year. Please make cheques payable to "The Friends of St John's Church, Cardiff". Alternatively, you may prefer to make your payment direct into our bank account by bank transfer or other means. Our bank details are: Lloyds Bank plc, Sort Code 31-91-63 a/c No. 00 52 63 90. "The Friends of St John's Church, Cardiff". We remain grateful to members for their continued support.

Richard Hall, (Hon.Sec.)