



THE FRIENDS OF ST JOHN'S CHURCH, CARDIFF

(Registered Charity 1066605)

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NEWSLETTER

September 2020

Dear Friend,

LIFE DURING THE PANDEMIC.

Since the issue of our last newsletter, the church has been closed from mid March, being subject to the regulations brought in to control Coronavirus. This has been a source of sadness for all of us. However, worship has not stopped, but thanks to the efforts of our vicar Canon Sarah Jones, Sunday worship has continued by use of modern communications. Each Sunday morning she has conducted a service of worship using a livestream on the church Facebook and YouTube channels. For those not on-line, each service has been recorded and is available later in the day on a special telephone service. By dialing 02920 101656, people can listen to it on their telephones. This has been much appreciated by our regulars, and has helped us keep together as a community. The online service is interactive, letting people to respond with greetings and to give prayer intentions.

Although the service lasts around 20 minutes, it requires a lot of work in preparation, sometimes the best part of a day. We are grateful for all the work Sarah has put into this, which has kept us very much in touch with God and with each other. This is just one of the ways in which Sarah and the other church officers have been busy during the period of closure. Although there is no worship in the building, the life of the church goes on, and there is much work to be done. Some of this can be done on-line, but the churchwardens and a small team of people have been visiting the building regularly on a rota basis to see that it is good order, and to deal with such things as post.

One sad aspect of the closure is that we have been unable to operate our tea-room in the vestry. This itself had grown into a community with its regular helpers and regular customers. And unfortunately it will have to remain closed for the time being, even after the church worship restarts, because it is a small room which makes the required social distancing difficult. The possibility of restarting it once the church re-opens is something that will be looked into.

Now that regulations have been eased, there are plans to re-open the church in a limited way for Sunday worship, though it is uncertain whether this can be extended to weekday opening for a while. Various measures have to be put in place to ensure that it is safe to open. Hymn singing is not allowed, and the number of worshippers has to be limited. Various other things normally used in church are prohibited, such as giving out books. A special way must be used to administer communion. Things will not be quite as they were.

REV'D LORNA HANNEY.

Our assistant curate Revd. Lorna Hanney was priested at Llandaff Cathedral on 27th June. The service, which in normal circumstances would attract a large congregation, was attended only by essential clergy and participants, and our parishioners were not able to be present to support her at this important time. She continues to serve in our parish, and we pray for her ministry.

FESTIVAL AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Because of restrictions there will be no Friends Annual Festival this year. Our constitution requires that we hold an Annual General Meeting. This will take place in the church on Sunday 18th October. It will be a short formal meeting confined to essential business. Members are requested not to attend unless they are already in the church for morning service. The meeting will begin immediately following morning worship, if there is any that day. For those not attending, a form of proxy is enclosed for voting by post. This lets you indicate your voting intentions. If you wish to register a vote you should return it by post to the address shown no later than 12th October. In the event that the church is not open that day, the meeting will be conducted online using Zoom or similar. The Annual Report with notice of the meeting, and a proxy form are enclosed with this newsletter. Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting are available on the Friends website.

For the same reasons, no Autumn Luncheon has been arranged for this year. This will be reviewed at a later date in view of the ongoing situation. It is possible that a spring lunch may be organised in its place at a date in next year, depending on circumstances. We will keep you informed.

FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE CHURCH.

With the enforced closure of the church for six months, there has been a substantial fall in income. With its doors closed, no collections at services, no weekday visitors, no concerts or events, and the tea room shut, the only income has been from regular standing giving through their banks from some of its congregation, and donations by way of the church website. The church is very grateful for this, but the amounts are not enough to match the continuing costs of the church even when closed. The church has had to draw on its reserves to remain solvent. When it re-opens, it is unlikely to recover its income to the pre-closure level, and will have to continue to use up its reserve funds. These will last out only for a limited time. For its doors to remain open, it is important for the church to find ways of increasing its regular income. The vicar and treasurer have been looking into new ways of giving using new technology, as people move away from traditional cash. These will only succeed if there are generous donors, able and ready to give. Do you think you can help secure the church's future in this way? Gifts and donations are accepted in any form, old or new, regular or single gifts. Please help us to continue our ministry to the city and keep our doors open to all who wish to come in. You can donate by visiting 'donations' on the church website (www.stjohnscardiff.wales), or by post direct to the church, St John's Church, St John Street, Cardiff CF10 1GL, or by post to the Hon. Treasurer of the Friends, address above. Any amount, large or small will be gratefully received.

Richard Hall, (Hon.Sec.)