



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

(Registered Charity 1066605)

**President.** Capt. Sir Norman Lloyd Edwards.  
**Chairman.** Mrs. Vanessa Hall.  
**Hon. Secretary.** Mr. Richard Hall, 206 Cyncoed Road, Cardiff. CF23 6RS  
**Hon. Treasurer.** Mr. Paul Davies, 342 Whitchurch Road, Heath, Cardiff, CF14 3NG.

### NEWSLETTER

May 2021

Dear Friend,

After having remained closed throughout the first three months of the year, St John's church was finally able to open its doors to worshippers on Easter Day, 4th April. It is only a small step on the return to normality because the church was opened only for two hours, for the Easter Sunday morning service. Since then it has continued to open in the same way each Sunday, just for the morning 10am service. It has to remain closed for the rest of the week. This is disappointing as St John's is a church where in normal times, there would be something going on every day, and many visitors coming in. But the stringent rules that still have to be kept to for infection control make it impractical to be open more often.

Even when it is open for service, it is far from normal, or what we would wish. The requirement for social distancing means that no more than about 50 people can be present for service, spaced out all over the building in allocated places. Masks must be worn, no singing is allowed, and people can not chat to each other or socialise before or after the service. Because of the restricted numbers, people are asked to book their seats in advance, or risk being turned away if the church is full to its allowed quota. This was the case on Easter day, and it is in a sense encouraging that numbers have come close to the quota every Sunday since.

While the restrictions remain, the on-line worship continues. Once the service in church restarted, the live Sunday worship on Facebook and Twitter has moved from the morning to 4.00 pm. It continues to attract a good number of regulars. A recorded version of the service is available on a special telephone number an hour later for those without internet access. Also, there is weekday worship on-line each day, Mon. – Fri., at 5.00 pm using Zoom. By these means, St John's is managing to hold its community together, and it is pleasing that this includes a good number of younger people.

### **FRIENDS ACTIVITIES.**

Unfortunately, because of the ongoing situation with coronavirus, the Friends are not able to make any plans for events or activities for the time being. The committee will review the position later in the year in the light of developments and any relaxation of government restrictions. In Wales at present there is a limit on how many people from how many households can gather together, making social events and meetings impossible.

## **BUILDING REPORT.**

There is nothing of significance to report about the building at this time. With the current restrictions it is not possible to undertake any developments. The future of the Vestry Block project will be reviewed, and may be revised in the light of the post-pandemic situation. The new heating plant seems to be working, having been kept turned down while the church has been closed. The church continues to be visited regularly by the church officers on a rota basis during the week to check that it is in good order.

## **CHURCH FINANCES.**

The enforced closure of the church has resulted in a substantial reduction in income. It has lost the Sunday collection plates, the wall boxes being used by visitors, hire fees for concerts and events, and the tea room income. There has been a more modest reduction in expenses, but not enough to balance the loss of incoming funds, because of the various overheads and fixed expenditure that have to be paid in all circumstances. To meet its outgoings, the church has had to draw heavily on its reserves. These will not last for ever. There has been some help in that the church has received some support grant from the diocese for which it is grateful, and it has also been supported by many of its congregation who have switched to making regular payments by standing order, by the Church in Wales Gift Direct scheme, or made donations by cheque. For all these the church is very grateful and thanks all who have helped.

There is one piece of favourable news, in that very recently the church has received a substantial legacy from the estate of the late Pauline Grainger. Pauline was one of the mainstays of the church, having been very active for most of her time in all aspects of the church's life, and particularly in organising and setting up the tea room operation. This legacy will give relief to the church from an immediate financial crisis, but it remains the case that even before the covid closure, the costs of running the church were substantially more than its regular income. It is hoped that funds from this legacy can be put towards projects to enhance the ministry of the church. Such a project would be a lasting memory to a faithful Christian. Careful thought will be given to consider what form this might take.

## **COMMUNICATION BY E-MAIL.**

If you have received this newsletter on paper, would you be willing to switch to getting it by email instead, to save us the costs of postage and distribution? You can do so by sending an email request to the Hon. Secretary, [richardhall@compuserve.com](mailto:richardhall@compuserve.com). But if you still prefer to receive it on paper, that is no problem. We will still be sending it out in this way.

Richard Hall, (Hon.Sec.)