



## 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  
**Asst. Treasurer.** Mrs. Janet Williams.

### NEWSLETTER

January 2024

Dear Friend,

We are once again at the start of a new year, and one in which our church can look forward with some hope to the future. Covid can be put behind us, and our congregation has recovered to its pre-pandemic levels, indeed is showing a slight increase, thanks to the hard work of our vicar, Canon Sarah Jones, and her team. From this month, Sunday evensong has now restarted, supported by our ever improving choir under the leadership of our young and energetic choir director Olly Hearn. Sunday afternoon online worship continues, attracting people from beyond Cardiff. There is Friday noon Said Eucharist each week in the church, and a short Evensong online each weekday.

In the run-up to Christmas, the church was able restart hosting some carol services for outside organisations, as well as providing space in the city centre for Cards for Good Causes. It held a number of special services for Advent and Christmas, including the traditional Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The church also hosted "The Christmas Story", a series of performances outside and inside the church, in which the story of the birth of Jesus is enacted by means of a puppet theatre. These free performances attracted a lot of attention by the passing public and organised children's groups, with further interest by having a small stable in the churchyard with real live donkeys, which delighted all who saw them.

Plans to provide a refreshment facility in the north aisle have come to fruition. A worktop, sink and cupboards have been installed in the north porch, together with a movable serving unit. This will enable teas, sandwiches and cakes to be served in the North Aisle, but not hot food. This is already in use for refreshments after Sunday service and is proving popular. It is hoped that with the help of volunteers it can be extended to opening on some weekdays. The advantage over the former tea room is that it is all at ground level, so no stairs to climb. Meanwhile, the former upstairs room is being used by the Kaleidoscope organisation, who have expanded their work to help drug users to break their addictions.

After considerable delay, the broken glass doors at the west entrance have been repaired. This required highly specialised work, as the doors are engraved. The entrance is again fully functioning, and the temporary plywood shutters have gone.

At the Friends Annual General Meeting last October, there were some changes to the executive committee. It was necessary, following the sudden death of our Hon. Treasurer Mr. Paul Davies, to appoint a new person to take charge of the accounts. The Hon. Secretary had been standing in, but Mrs. Janet Williams volunteered to take up the work as Assistant Treasurer. Miss Norma Thomas, a long-standing member of the church and the

committee, chose to stand down, due to advancing age. We are most grateful for the very many years of service she has given to the church in so many ways. A new member of the committee was appointed, Mrs. Ruth Mantle. The president Sir Norman Lloyd Edwards was reappointed.

### **GRACE CAFE.**

The Grace Cafe in the South Aisle of the church continues its once-weekly initiative to provide food and hot drinks to the homeless and deprived on the streets of central Cardiff., which it operates in conjunction with Llandaff Cathedral. Anyone is welcome to come in during the opening time to refresh themselves, and also find someone to talk to, and at this time of year to warm up. Companionship is often as important to them as food. Following a trial period it has been decided to continue with it.

### **DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITIONS.**

With its city-centre position, and space in the outer aisles, the church is well placed to hold exhibitions and displays for outside organisations of a suitable ethos. It is easy for the public to pop in for a few minutes and see the good works that various organisations do in the community. The church is trying to develop this by making connections with the bodies that provide these sorts of activities, to increase public awareness of what goes on and how they provide help to people with problems or in need.

### **GIFT AID.**

Gift Aid is a government scheme by which registered charities are able to reclaim income tax paid on money donated to the charity. The Friends being a registered charity is able to do this, providing a useful boost to its income. Gift Aid can be claimed on members subscriptions and other donations. We encourage members to make a Gift Aid declaration on amounts paid to us in that way. For us to claim, the donor must have paid income tax on the money donated. If you are a taxpayer it costs you nothing, but benefits the Friends. When paying your annual membership, please tick the Gift Aid box on the subscription form. If you pay by bank transfer, inform us by any convenient means, verbally, by post, or by email to the Hon. Secretary, richardhall@compuserve.com.

### **SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER**

For those that subscribe annually, the subscription for 2024 is now due. A remittance form is enclosed for your use. The rates are the same as last year. If you wish to make your payment direct into our bank account, our bank details can be obtained by contacting the Hon. Secretary or the church. If you prefer to pay by cheque, please make the cheque payable to "The Friends of St John's Church, Cardiff". Please send it to the Hon Secretary (address above) with the remittance form. We remain grateful to members for their continued support, and of course for any contributions by way of additional donations.

Richard Hall, (Hon.Sec.)