

Annual Newsletter 2018

Dates for your diary

Annual General Meeting

The Friends AGM in 2018 will be held on Monday 16th April 2018, 6pm at St Mary's Church. All Subscribers are most welcome to attend!



Annual Friends of Luton Parish Church Concert

*Friday 22nd June 2018 ,
7pm at St Mary's Church*

Join us for this annual celebration featuring the Luton Youth Concert Band, Muskaan Jonathan piano solo, Andrew Beale and John Spurgeon cello and piano duet, and other guest artists from Luton and surrounding areas!

The conductor is Simon Router. No cost to come along, wine and other refreshments are included during the interval and a collection is taken at the end in aid of the Friends. It will be a pleasure to see you there!

Annual Friends of Luton Parish Church Service

*Sunday 21st October 2018,
10.30am at St Mary's Church*

The annual service visiting preacher this year is:

Revd Jude Smith, Team Rector of the Moor Allerton and Shadwell Team in Leeds, and previously of this parish!

Stay on after the service for a historical tour of Luton Parish Church hosted by Peter Adams.



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50 years' dedicated
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The future vision for St Mary's Church



By Revd Mike Jones (pictured left), Vicar of St Mary's and Revd Andrew Gardner (pictured right), Curate of St Mary's

St Mary's is the town centre Parish Church of Luton. It is unique as a historical building in the town, being nearly 900 years old and is Luton's only Grade 1 listed building. The church has been described as "Luton's medieval jewel" and has previously had an imposing presence in the town centre. This has been lost somewhat in recent years due to reorientation of the town centre, but is now coming into its own again with the regeneration of the area. The church is the venue of choice for many community events: civic services including the Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, for University of Bedfordshire graduations, University and school carol services, and a variety of musical concerts.

Alongside its role as steward of this magnificent building, St Marys has a vibrant presence in the town. It describes itself as a church of many nations gathering together in Christ, that seeks God's kingdom and his presence, transform the community,



grow the church and to be a reconciling presence in Luton. The church has a strong presence in the town, through its youth work with marginalised young people, and the work of the St Marys Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, active in peacebuilding, community mediation and social justice work across the town, as well as through its many members involved in town-wide charities.

There are advanced plans to re-develop a large site, Power Court, opposite St Mary's. If this gets planning permission, St Mary's Church will be right in the middle of a busy town centre area between the new Luton Town FC Football Ground, new shopping and residential facilities, the Luton Mall and the University of Bedfordshire.

Given St Mary's current, and potential future prominence in the town, it is highly desirable to have facilities that are welcoming, warm and accessible for future generations. There is work to do in the church. We especially wish to give easy access to this historic building, and to enable people to better understand its history and heritage and its place in British history.

Finally the facilities need to be at a modern standard to serve the community more effectively and to better facilitate those with additional needs.

Heritage

The church has been well maintained over the past 50 years through the work of the Friends of Luton Parish Church. However a heating system now needs to be replaced. Additionally recent work has suggested that leakage from the heating system has led to extensive damage to stone work which thus requires conservation.

Interpretation

Recent work by the church has enabled school children to engage with the Church's history and heritage. We are especially keen to engage with the 55% of Luton's population who are not of British origin, using St Marys and its heritage to give deeper understanding and appreciation of British history and culture, and the churches place in it.



News from the Buildings Committee for St Mary's Church *by Ralph Gough*



There is good news and not-so-good news at this time.

The first good news is that the new alarm system has been fitted to the roof of the church and of the extension. This gives us 24/7 cover against fire and intrusion via the alarm company's monitoring system, and is beneficial to our insurance cover. The Friends of Luton Parish



Church assisted with the substantial cost of this.

The not-so-good news is that the heating system in the church has finally succumbed to the years of deposits clogging up the Victorian pipes, and has ceased to function. A solution to the problem is being sought urgently, but there is no easy fix, and a final answer is likely to be a little while coming.

Other good news is that we have received approval to correct the alignment of West Door, which is dropping on its hinges. As part of this work, the tiled floor in the tower will be repaired where it has become cracked, and a doormat sunk into the floor to absorb wet footprints, so that we can expose the main body of tiles within the tower which are currently covered. So the West Door will once again open properly, and the tower

entrance can be the imposing entry it should be. This work is expected to take place later this year.

The 2018 quinquennial inspection took place in March, and at the time of writing we are awaiting the architect's report. We don't think there will be any nasty surprises.



Wills and Legacies *by Nic Pestell*



For people who may find it difficult to make significant gifts to charities such as "The Friends of Luton Parish Church" during their lifetime, making

this Charity a beneficiary in your Will is a way of ensuring that money which you no longer need is put to good use and, at the same time, you may reduce your estate's liability to Inheritance Tax. Some seven out of ten adults who die in this country fail to make a Will, and if you do not make a Will, then your estate will be divided up according to how the law dictates it should, and not necessarily as you would have wished.

It is always advisable to instruct a Solicitor to make sure your Will is properly drawn up, valid and enforceable, and to ensure that your Will reflects your wishes. If you already have a Will, it is possible to include a legacy

to The Friends in your Will by having a codicil drawn up, and this is a simple and inexpensive process.

If you would like to leave a legacy to The Friends of Luton Parish Church, your Solicitor might find the following wording useful:

"I give to the Friends of Luton Parish Church (registered Charity Number 240750) the sum of pounds (£.....) for its general purposes".

25% off setting up your will with Machins Solicitors

Nic Pestell at Machins Solicitors, Luton, would be delighted to help set up your will with a 25% discount. Email: nic.pestell@machins.co.uk

About us



Clifford Bygrave

- 50 years' dedicated service to the
Friends of Luton Parish Church *by Nic Pestell*

This year marks the 50th anniversary of our Chairman, Clifford Bygrave, joining the Executive Committee of the Friends of Luton Parish Church.

Back in 1968, the Chairman of the Friends was Mr John Dandy who was a local businessman and a member of St Mary's. Mr Dandy had been instrumental in setting up the charity just a few years previously and approached Clifford who was then a young partner in the Luton accountancy firm, Arthur Young McClelland Moores & Co (which developed into and became part of the global accountancy firm now known

as Ernst & Young) to ask whether he would be prepared to join the Committee. In 1972, Clifford was then appointed as a Trustee of the Friends and served as Treasurer from 1976 to 1998.

During those early years of the Friends in the late 1960's and early 1970's, Clifford recalls that the Committee and the Trustees met at the offices of Gibbs & Dandy and, later, these meetings took place at Clifford's own offices at Ernst & Young at Capability Green during David Cheetham's term as Chairman.

Those early years were not without their difficulties, particularly following the decay to the north porch in the early 1970's when

some difficult decisions had to be made but the Friends were able to support St Mary's and a sum of approximately £14,000 was granted to help with the restoration (in those days not an insignificant sum).

On David's retirement in 2010, Clifford took up the mantle of Chairman and, particularly given his high level of accountancy and charitable trust knowledge and experience, he has served us well and diligently over the last 8 years as Chairman and indeed during these last 50 years as an active member of the Executive Committee and Trustee.

We therefore take this opportunity to acknowledge this work and to give him our thanks and best wishes for the future.

Contact the Friends!

You can email the team on friends@stmarysluton.org

Find out more on our excellent new website www.friendsoflutonparishchurch.org

Join the Friends on www.give.net/20193962

Download the brochure and application form at

www.friendsoflutonparishchurch.org/assets/files/downloadsFriendsOfLutonParishChurch.pdf

Email the individual trustees and executive committee members as follows:

Trustees

Chair - Clifford Bygrave - rustlingscb@gmail.com

Secretary - Nic Pestell - nic.pestell@machins.co.uk

Communications - Andrew Beale - andrewbeale@bealeshotels.co.uk

Trustee - Trevor Askew - trevaskew@madasafish.com

Executive Committee

All the trustees plus:

Treasurer - John Spurgeon - john.spurgeon506@btinternet.com

Member - Ralph Gough - ralph.gough@ymail.com

St Mary's Parish Church Vicar - Mike Jones - mikejones@stmarysluton.org

St Mary's Parish Church Curate - Andrew Gardner - andygardner@stmarysluton.org



GDPR

GDPR – new EU rules on General Data Protection

Regulation mean

that we are writing to all subscribers for permission to remain in contact with you by various means.

When you receive our forms, we would be very grateful if you could fill them in and send them back to us in the stamped addressed envelope provided.