

Annual Newsletter 2024

Friends of
Luton Parish
Church

Dates for your diary

Annual General Meeting Monday 15th April 2024 - 6pm

All Friends of Luton Parish Church are warmly invited to attend the AGM of the Friends at 6pm on Monday 15th April 2024. **This will be held at the church.**



Annual Concert Friday 5th July 2024 - 7.30pm at St Mary's Church

We are so delighted to announce the return of the excellent Simon Router and his colleagues, conducting the Luton Music Service senior string group and Luton youth orchestra in the first half and then the Luton concert band performing the second half at the Annual Concert on Friday 5th July 2024 at 7.30pm. There is no charge for admission but a collection is taken at the end in aid of the Friends of Luton Parish Church and interval refreshments are served.

Annual Service Sunday 20th October 2024 10.30am at St Mary's Church

A service of thanksgiving for the work of the Friends of Luton Parish Church. The speaker will be confirmed in due course.

Stay on after the service for a historical tour of Luton's medieval jewel by our resident expert Peter Adams.

From our Treasurer John Spurgeon

We would love to welcome you on board as a subscriber - as little as £12pa for an individual or £20 for a couple/family (but we hope you will want to give more!).

Ways of doing this are:

Standing Order - You give instructions to your bank for a regular gift (download our leaflet from our website for a suitable form). Friends of Luton Parish Church, Sort code 20-53-97, Account number 90358223

Gift Aid - If you are a UK taxpayer we can benefit by boosting your gift by 25% at no extra cost to yourself

Give.net (Stewardship) - They deal with all the tax issues themselves! Visit [give.net](https://www.give.net) or visit our website: www.friendsoflutonparishchurch.org/help/ (for single or regular gift): "How can you help>Donate/raise funds.

Help us to be able to face the challenges of maintaining this beautiful building in the middle of our town! Thank you.

Friends of Luton Parish Church Trustees



Nic Pestell
Chair



Nicki Denton-Masih
Secretary



John Spurgeon
Treasurer



Andrew Beale
Communications

Interview with Architect Mark Eddison



An interview by Andrew Beale with Mark Eddison MA Dip.Arch(CANTAB) RIBA AABC, Diocesan architect to Luton Parish Church

Please introduce yourself and your connection with St Mary's Church

I am the appointed Quinquennial Inspector for St Mary's Church. Every 5 years I am required to make an inspection and report on the condition of the fabric for the PCC and provide a prioritised list of items to address - from urgent through to 'nice to do'. Main issues checked involve structural stability, water or moisture penetration, and maintenance. The idea is to keep the building properly operational by identifying fabric problems and thereby guard its physical future

You carry out a quinquennial inspection every five years on behalf of the PCC and have just completed the latest one. What are the main findings this time?

The church building appears to be in reasonable condition and well looked after. Externally there are some local repairs required to the flashings internal to parapets on the roof, and some local repairs required to external masonry. The erosion of the masonry also generally needs to be monitored.

Internally there is moisture penetration up the walls at low levels from the ground. The Hall has its challenges – notably the copper roof covering may be coming towards the end of its life after 60 years.

You spoke beautifully at the annual service last year about transcendence and imminence. What do you mean by these two words, and what relation do they have to St Mary's ?

In Christianity God is both transcendent (above us) and imminent (here with us). We need a balance of both, and architecture can reflect this. Medieval churches were very good at expressing transcendence (eyes drawn upwards by spires, buttresses and soaring ceilings, and use of natural light as a metaphor for divine light etc.) These qualities have never been lost and are there at St Mary's.

These buildings are however not good at providing immanence for today (God encountered in the connections we make with other people and in relationships and community).

They do not provide access, can overlook facilities which enhance community and welcome, and can be cold and inhospitable. The problem with transcendence these days is the cost of providing it new, so a medieval church adapted to current community expectations can provide a spectacular and inspirational building and the opportunity to do so at St Mary's is there to be developed to its maximum.

You have carried out refurbishments at numerous churches in the St Albans diocese and beyond. What would you like to see done at St Mary's over the next few years ?

Personally it might be provision of suitable facilities (WCs and refreshments), a natural welcome internally, a place to relax, be family, and drink coffee with others under a canopy of transcendence, and ability for people not used to church to be able to step easily over the threshold. How the building might best address the new Luton Town FC football stadium and its impact will be an interesting thing to see unfold.

Wills and Legacies by Nicki Denton-Masih

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".

The beautiful Friends of Luton Parish Church Christmas cards will be on sale at the back of church from October at just £5 per pack of five.



Nicki Denton-Masih at Machins Solicitors, Luton, would be delighted to help set up your will with a 25% discount



Email nicki.denton-masih@machins.co.uk

Contact the Friends!

You can email the team on:

friends@stmarysluton.org

Find out more on our excellent website:

www.friendsoflutonparishchurch.org

Email the individual trustees and executive committee members as follows:

Trustees Chair - Nic Pestell

nic.pestell@machins.co.uk

Communications - Andrew Beale

andrewbeale@bealeshotels.co.uk

Secretary - Nicki Denton-Masih

nicki.denton-masih@machins.co.uk

Treasurer - John Spurgeon

john.spurgeon506@btinternet.com

Join the Friends on www.give.net/20193962

Download the brochure and application form at:

www.friendsoflutonparishchurch.org/assets/files/downloads/FriendsOfLutonParishChurch.pdf

Executive Committee

All the trustees plus:

Committee member - Anthony Moss

anthonymoss@stmarysluton.org

St Mary's Parish Church Vicar - Mike Jones

mikejones@stmarysluton.org