



St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell

Friends of St Edmund's

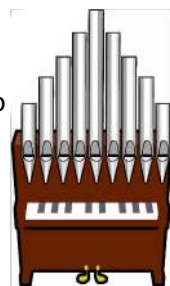
Newsletter: October 2020

A Message from our Chair, Julian Stedman: I hope this message finds you well? It has certainly been a difficult few months for everyone, and I sincerely hope that you and your families have remained safe from the virus and from any related ill-effects. I was delighted when we were able to open up the church building again, first for private prayer and now for regular Sunday Services, albeit in very constrained arrangements. The church has not changed - but in many ways we have. Our communications have been conducted mainly through electronic means, which I don't feel are appropriate for Friends events, so apologies if you have been looking forward to getting together. Realistically, I think we shall need to wait at least until after Christmas to hold our next meeting - hopefully in the church itself, but only time will tell. **I wish you well for the autumn season!**



Friends News from Kaye Bennett: Since the last newsletter the number of Friends remains the same. I would like to say a big "Thank you" to the Friends who have continued to support the scheme with their standing orders and cheque donations. The balance in the bank account currently stands at £2915.00, ready to support the next project.

Activities and events in 2020: Eric Gower: Crickhowell & District History Society had asked me to give a talk in September which has now been postponed until 2021. The talk was planned to be about the three men who were key in the installation of St Edmund's Church organ. When we have a rescheduled date, our Friends will be informed. "... I have the makings of a talk based on a Victorian photograph I have of the St Edmund's chancel and sanctuary. It shows some interesting differences as well as similarities with the view today and raises some interesting questions. This can be arranged at comparatively short notice when the COVID-19 situation has stabilised.



Fundraising and Social Events at St Edmund's: Kathryn Bullon:

I was very lucky to be able to go on holiday earlier this year just before lockdown. I remember lying on the beach compiling questions in my head for the Pie, Peas and Quiz evening planned for a few days after I was due home. I never imagined that the event wouldn't take place. We had been planning that night for ages and it was going to be the highlight of the year for me. Being a northerner I am obviously a pie, pea and quiz lover (needless to say the pies are no longer in the freezer and are sitting on my hips as a result of the Covid diet!). My phone keeps pinging reminders for all the events we had planned for this year. Afternoon Tea to commemorate VE day; a 1920s evening to mark 100 years since The Church in Wales was formed; a much looked-forward-to 2nd coach trip to Oxford and another one to the Worcester Victorian Market; Flower Arranging with Debbie, and The Harvest Supper. We should be hosting a choir next week, sadly it isn't going to happen. The ones I think we were most sad about were The August Open-Church days. I have really missed all the social events and the church bank account is also much depleted!



On a positive note, we have been able to open the Church every day for two hours for people to come inside the building for private prayer. It's been a real blessing to open the doors to visitors and they have come in large numbers. There has rarely been a day when nobody has come. It's been lovely to welcome people although it's very alien to us not to be able to offer refreshments as we would do usually. It's been a very strange year!! Let's hope and pray that this awful virus goes away and that we can resume meeting together and having fun again very soon.



Church matters: Update on our Our Church Heritage Project:

Adrian Andrews, People's Church Warden: In July, after travel restrictions were lifted, our Architect visited for a site meeting at which we discussed repairs to the tower parapet and spire shingles, and also to the West boundary retaining wall. For the work to the tower, a contractor has been agreed and we await the specifications from the Architect so that a faculty application can be made. We hope to get this work done ASAP to prevent damp penetration, assuming the

contractors are able to travel here. The Architect has been asked to draw up a scheme for the west retaining wall so that it can go out to tender and we can seek grant aid. Within the church, a new sound desk has been installed. Permission has been given to go



ahead with the conservation of the effigies of Sir Grimbald and Lady Sybil Pauncefote when funding is in place. £10,000 is required, of which approx. half has been raised so far. In the churchyard, Simon, our grass-cutter will be removing ivy and other unwanted vegetation during the autumn and winter. Many thanks to those who have helped in the churchyard during the summer.

A New Initiative for our Church Yard: led by Anthony Silwood: We all see and hear from others how much improved the appearance of the graveyard is since it has been regularly tended by our current gardener. We have had a great deal of positive feedback from locals and visitors alike as they walk along Church Lane and the footpath between the Church graveyard and Town cemetery. Unfortunately, this level of maintenance comes at a cost which unfortunately is over and above what the Church can easily afford. Also, graveyard maintenance is not just the cutting of grass but also includes, for example, the removal of ivy from walls and headstones, the maintenance of shrubs and the clearing of water channels and rainwater gulleys. Normally this additional work is done by volunteers. However, many of these volunteers, whilst always prepared to help, are not getting any younger and there are those who would wish to help but are unable to do so because of health conditions

So where do we go from here? Do we allow the appearance of the graveyard to go back to the level it was or do we maintain and improve it further? I think we would all prefer the latter. Therefore, as outgoing Peoples' Warden, I have set myself the challenge of gathering a group of like-minded people and organisations who would be prepared to pledge an annual monetary donation to the church to be solely used for the upkeep of the graveyard. I would see this group being formed from members of the Church, the wider parish and organisations within the town.



Might the Friends of St Edmund's Church be willing to join this group?

A Message from our Rector, Rev. Rana Khan: In Isaiah 41 v10

God says to his people: *"...fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

Due to the recent crisis the whole world is being reshaped, for which our little town and the church have no experience; the pandemic is impacting on our lives for much longer than we had hoped back in March. However we trust in a living God, who helps us in difficult times through fellowship with one another and with Him. The Friends of St Edmund's Church are a very supportive group, and we are really thrilled with our new glass doors at the West end of the Church which the Friends paid for. It is truly wonderful, when I am preaching, to be able to look out on our world through those new glass doors. We are using all available options to continue meeting with God and our community - St Edmund's is open every day for private prayer and the Sunday service. Other opportunities such as Facebook, YouTube and the church's website are actively being used to reach out to our local community and to meet with one another. I greatly value the contributions of those people who are using their skills and gifts to make this happen. I would urge the Friends of St Edmund's to support 'Church without Walls', the digital ministry of St Edmund's Church, by encouraging people to watch and to engage with our [YouTube channels](#), [Facebook](#) and our [website](#).

We believe that, with God's help we shall continue to be able to offer the church as a safe place for public and private prayer, and through our online presence a message of hope, love and care for our local community.

And finally...

You can find more information about happenings and other events at St Edmund's on our website www.crickhowellparish.org.uk, or email our membership secretary Kaye Bennett at: kaye.bennett39@yahoo.co.uk.

Dates for your Diary: Sadly, none as yet, but we will keep you informed..

Thank you for all that you do to support St Edmund's Church – we are truly grateful.

