

# FRIENDS NEWS



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## FROM THE CHAIR

Clare Johnson

It's a long time for many of us since we've been into the Cathedral and doubtless much will feel different when we return, not least the social distancing arrangements for visiting and worship. But the Friends is the same, and as the Cathedral opens again for services – and the Friends office is accessible again – it's time to pick up where we left off and update you on what's been happening, albeit up to the shutdown in March.

If you've regularly taken a seat on the right-hand side of the Cathedral you could be forgiven for thinking it's cold enough for a frost fair on the river. Even on a summer's evening the draught on that side of the building is particularly chilly. One of our objectives as Friends is to 'further any religious or other purposes in connection with Southwark Cathedral and in particular the maintenance, repair and beautification of the Cathedral and its fabric and furnishings.' We were pleased, then, back in 2019, to be able to agree to fund a restoration of the parish door in the south choir aisle, the deterioration of which has been a major cause of the draught. Careful conservation and realignment of this historic door will, we hope, make a noticeable difference to the comfort of the congregation, choir and clergy and also help stop heat loss from radiators, saving the Cathedral money. If you visit the Cathedral this autumn, you will notice the

work has been completed and the restored door is in place.

In 2019 the Friends also provided a grant for the restoration of the antique altar frontal cupboard, again in the south choir aisle, and new cassocks for the vergers and for the choir which look wonderful. As well as through subscriptions, in 2019 money was raised for the Friends through a number of well-attended events including a tour of the Old Bailey, a talk on a newly-acquired British Library manuscript called the Southwark Hours, a day trip to Winchester Cathedral and St Cross Hospital, and a talk in association with the Greater Chapter on the origins of Roman London.

For obvious reasons we have not been able to enjoy the events we had planned for 2020 and we were particularly disappointed to miss the Becket 850 pilgrimage walk to Canterbury from Southwark in May. We also had to cancel our June AGM and drinks party – please keep an eye on the website for the rescheduled 'remote' AGM, alas without the drinks! We do hope to pick up our programme of events as and when it's safe to do so. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support of the Friends during this difficult year and I do hope we'll meet again before long.

# FROM THE CATHEDRAL

The Reverend Canon Wendy Robbins

On Being the Director of Press and Communications during the Lockdown  
I have always thought that my day job was a busy one and have often said that it is hard to imagine it could get busier. Well, like many people, I had not bargained for the effect of the pandemic. Those of us who work at the Diocesan Office, Trinity House, down Borough High Street started to work from home a few days before the lockdown was announced. So, my team began to meet at 10am every day on Teams which is a Microsoft programme a bit like Zoom or FaceTime. As a member of the Bishop's Coronavirus Task Group I was one of five, along with Andrew Nunn, our Dean, who was responsible for sending out material to all the Incumbents, Churchwardens and PCC Secretaries across the Diocese. To begin with that was a mammoth task and although it has calmed down a little now as things are slowly returning to 'the new normal', it has still been a busy time.

Zoom and other similar programmes have made it possible to continue to hold meetings and they are a godsend but also very tiring. Churches across the Diocese, just like the Cathedral, begun to stream services and my department's role was to help them to know how best to do this and to make sure that all the correct streaming licensing details were available to everyone. It has been surprising how quickly most of our churches have taken to streaming and doing things online more and keeping in touch with their parishioners via the phone and via WhatsApp etc.

For many it has been a steep learning curve but people have worked hard to ensure worship continues even if it is in a different way. It has been brilliant to learn we can adapt so quickly and things can be moved online when necessary. But, nothing can replace worshipping together in person and it has been good to be back in the Cathedral, even if that too feels very different.

For me other things are changing too as Bishop Christopher and the Dean appointed me the new Canon Chancellor and Director of Lay Training, Lay Ministry and Continuing Ministerial Development. I am delighted to be able to continue being involved with the Cathedral and look forward to this new role but I know I will miss the helter skelter non-stop immediacy of my role in comms.

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## THE BOROUGH FREE FRIDGE

David Adamson

Starting with a single whole cod donated by a member of the public in Borough Market, from the crypt of St George the Martyr we have fed 5000 people since the Lockdown started. We began with a fish pie for a handful of people, we have since recruited professional chefs and a large number of brilliant volunteers to help us prepare and deliver 1000 meals a week to Southwark, Bermondsey, and Lambeth. We are turning donated supermarket surplus and short shelf-life goods such as fruit and vegetables from waste goods to valuable items for someone who desperately needs them. The numbers of people we are serving is growing as time passes and we are exploring ways

of ensuring the long-term viability of our project going forward.

On average we feed 300 people per week, giving each adult 10kg of healthy, nutritious food - food that we would be proud to serve our own friends and loved ones.

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## SHOPPING AT SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL

We are all getting used to shopping online and now you can make your purchases from the Cathedral Shop while the shop itself is closed. All your favourite lines are available – Doorkins gifts, cards, and much more. Remember when you use the Cathedral shop you are supporting the ministry of the Cathedral. All the profits from Southwark Cathedral Enterprises (the trading company for the Cathedral) go straight into the Cathedral accounts. So please direct your friends to this new venture and look out for seasonal offers.

[www.southwarkcathedralshop.org](http://www.southwarkcathedralshop.org)

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## EVENTS THIS YEAR

Kate Dean

Sadly, most of our events have been postponed for this year. We hope it will be possible to run them in 2021 which will make it a bumper year for the Friends!

### Christmas Market

As we go to press we are unsure if the

Christmas Market will take place but if it is possible it will be over 3 days 3-5 December. As the Cathedral will not have a marquee in place the Market will be held in the Cathedral Nave. As soon as everything is confirmed we will be in touch but in the meantime do keep this date in your diary.

### Early in the planning

A weekend break to Coventry Cathedral, the Becket 2020 pilgrimage to Canterbury and for 2022 a weekend pilgrimage to Dresden continuing the theme of Reconciliation. We will keep you up to date with information as plans unfold.

Enclosed with this newsletter is the booklet we produced for the pilgrimage which should have taken place in May. We anticipate following the same programme next year so hope you will find the booklet useful and will be encouraged to join us, if not for the entire week then perhaps for the odd day or two

### Annual General Meeting

Saturday 17 October

We will be holding an Annual General Meeting on Saturday 17 October at 2.30pm. You will be able to either come to the Cathedral for the meeting which will ensure you can socially distance or you can join us via a Zoom link. Please contact the office if you would like to attend in person so we can make appropriate arrangements to reflect the numbers expected. If you prefer to attend remotely please send an email to [kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org) and I will send the Zoom access codes in the week before the meeting.

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# CONTACTING THE OFFICE

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