

Annual Newsletter 2019

Dates for your diary

Annual General Meeting

The Friends AGM in 2019 will be held on Monday 8th April 2019, 6pm at St Mary's Church. All Subscribers are most welcome to attend!



Annual Friends of Luton Parish Church Concert

~~Friday 5th July 2019,~~
**REVISED DATE: Friday
28th June 2019 7pm at St
Mary's Church**

Join us for this annual celebration featuring the Luton Youth Concert Band, Luton Music Centre Senior Strings and the Luton Music Centre Jazz Band. 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 20th October 2019,
10.30am at St Mary's
Church*

A service of thanksgiving for the completion of the heating project which has led to the closure of the main church building for the past two winters.

The preacher will be Revd Mike Jones, Vicar of St Mary's Luton. Stay on after the service for a historical tour of Luton's medieval jewel by Peter Adams.



**The Heating project
at St Mary's - P2**



**Where in Luton Parish
Church can you find
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**Meet the new
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ST MARY'S APPEAL

Helping Luton's medieval jewel keep shining!

The Heating project at St Mary's Church

Andrew Beale, Trustee of the Friends of Luton Parish Church, and chair of fundraising for the St Mary's appeal

The Victorian heating at St Mary's has been failing for a number of years, but in 2017 we took the decision to close the main church building for the winter of 2017/18 which was a big step for such a prestigious building in the heart of Luton.

Meanwhile we went through the complicated process of obtaining a Faculty from the Diocesan Advisory Committee of St Albans, engaging an architect and heating consultant, and seeking contractors to carry out the work.

And there was also the small issue of raising the necessary funds, initially budgeted at around £240,000 !

The Victorians did many things very well, such as laying the heating pipes in easily accessible open grates throughout the nave of the church. Unfortunately in the Chancel and Wenlock Chapel, things were not so accessible.

It became clear that we would need to conduct detailed surveys of these areas to try and establish what was underneath the beautifully tiled Chancel floor and Wenlock Chapel stone floor.

We became involved with the local archaeological unit who took an interest in our work, and with English Heritage who didn't want any of the beautiful areas of the church touched.

There were extensive meetings, and numerous plans put forward to install a modern central heating system into this medieval church.

Eventually we settled on the best compromise between modern fuel efficiency and warmth, and how much of the church we could leave undisturbed.

The installation of two smaller boilers rather than one large one would mean that in the shoulder autumn and spring months, the church could be heated by one economical smaller boiler, while in the cold winter months, both boilers could run. It also meant that there was built in redundancy in the case of the failure of one boiler.

There was only one small catch once the plans had been agreed and a DAC Faculty obtained....the budget had rocketed from £240,000 to £464,000 !

Fortunately we had the proceeds from the sale of a staff house on Crawley Green Road reserved for a rainy day such as this one, and we set up an appeal with a target of £40,000 raised by a multitude of church congregation fundraising ideas such as quiz nights, auctions, sponsorships, craft fairs, etc, and £424,000 from major donors and our own funds.

To date over £30,000 has been raised by the congregation, a superb effort considering the parish is actually a very small one.

The Friends of Luton Parish Church naturally came to the rescue with an incredibly generous £50,000 as did an anonymous benefactor from Luton with a wonderful £60,000. Other donors included the Steel Trust with a superb £25,000, Beds Herts Historic Churches Trust, All Churches Trust, and Wixhamtree Trust all with £10,000, and the Duchess of Westminster who got married at St Mary's in 1978 with a lovely £5,000.

The project got underway in January 2019 with the main church building shut down for a second winter and contractors on site.

As I write in mid March 2019, some £430,000 or 93% of the appeal funds have been raised, but we are extremely grateful for any more donations which can be sent to the St Mary's Appeal c/o St Mary's Church Luton. It is hoped that the church will be fully open by May 2019 and at some point in 2019 we will be holding a service of celebration for the great and the good of Luton and Bedfordshire.

This has been a fascinating project, both the actual technicalities of stripping out a Victorian heating system, and the graft involved in raising a substantial sum to pay for it all. It has brought home to me how much love and appreciation there is in Luton and Bedfordshire for this marvelous medieval jewel of a Grade 1 listed church, and how much it means to us all. Meeting weekly in the cramped but sufficient conditions of the church hall also makes us realise what a gem we have and how fortunate we are as a congregation to be able to meet in such a superb church.

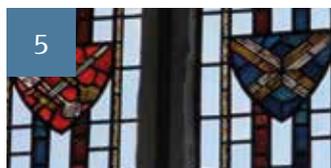
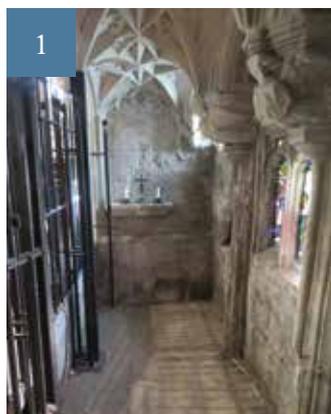
I hope that the heating system will last for another 150 years, and thank the Friends of Luton Parish Church profusely for the endless support given for this wonderful church in the heart of our town.



Andrew Beale

Where in Luton Parish Church can you find the following?

by Peter Adams



Answers:

1. Inside the Barnard Chantry – one of the smallest chapels in England, possibly a leper chapel accessed by the door to the outside.
2. The crown of the Baptistry. Built in the 1340's the baptistry is unique in England.

3. A chandelier also designed by George Pace.
4. Arms of Sir John Wenlock.
5. Clerestory windows. The clerestory is the upper tier of the nave with its own windows. The windows honour the dioceses of the Church of England. Those

6. This detail of a "grotesque" that supports the roof timbers.
7. An unusual perspective showing the magnificent design of the Wenlock arch, reputedly one of the finest double arches in Europe.
8. Tomb of Sir John Wenlock who died 1471 at the Battle of Tewkesbury.

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".

25% off setting up your will with Machins Solicitors

Nicki Denton-Masih at Machins Solicitors, Dunstable, would be delighted to help set up your will with a 25% discount. Email nicki.denton-masih@machins.co.uk

About us

Meet the new members of the Executive Committee



Anthony Moss

After 36 years working in the Energy Industry for Centrica plc and its predecessors, Anthony now spends a lot of his time seeking out things that need doing at St Mary's. Along the way, he has become one of the Churchwardens. He is a jack of many trades, not necessarily master of any of them! He has been a member of the church since 2002 when he married Catherine, who is on the ministry team at St Mary's. He has a vision for the church building to be a welcoming place, open during the day for the people in

Luton. A place where people can go for friendship, some stillness in the midst of their lives, to reflect on spiritual things, or just to admire the beauty and heritage there. It is a place that he feels should be "given back" to the town in which it stands. Anthony has many interests and enthusiasms which include astronomy, modern classic cars, music of all kinds, watches, butterflies and playing with tech and computers to name just a few!



Nicki Denton-Masih

Nicki is an Associate Solicitor in the Private Client department at Machins, Dunstable Road. She joined the firm in 2008. Nicki is actively involved with her local church in Kempston and also acts as Trustee for the Kempston Net Charitable Trust, helping isolated individuals in the community. Outside of work, Nicki spends lots of

time reading, painting and being with friends. Mainly Nicki is an avid equestrian. Many hours are spent training her horses for showjumping competitions which see her travelling around the UK most weekends, with husband Markus part of the support crew.

Contact the Friends!

You can email the team on friends@stmarysluton.org

Find out more on our excellent 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

Committee member - Nicki Denton-Masih nicki.denton-masih@machins.co.uk

Committee member - Anthony Moss anthonymoss@stmarysluton.org

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

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



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 20-53-30, 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](http://www.give.net) or visit our website <http://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.