



City Parish Journal

No. 79

EASTER 2020

Through the year with the church in the market-place



The St David's Day Lord Mayor's Civic Service.

Jesus the Saviour is Risen!

**The Parish Magazine of
The City Parish of St John the Baptist, Cardiff**

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The Parish Magazine of The City Parish of
St John the Baptist, Cardiff.

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EDITORIAL

Who would have thought a month or so ago that the whole world would have been in the state it now is. We have grown up with the idea that plague and pestilence were something from the distant past, but here it is in the 21st century. All our church buildings closed. But that does not cut us off from God. We can conduct our devotions from home, as we pray for all who are suffering directly or indirectly from this outbreak. The blessing is that modern communication technology enables us to keep in touch, and keep our community together, even though we cannot meet in person. Canon Sarah, Lorna, Emma, the churchwardens and others have been working hard the past few weeks to keep our church running and our people connected, especially the live stream every evening in holy week. Thanks to all who contributed. At Easter, Christ rose from the tomb. We must sustain our faith that before too long our church will reopen its doors and come back to its full life in our risen Lord.

Because of the temporary church closure, the publication date of the next City Parish Journal is uncertain. Contributors will be notified by email when a copy date is set.

From The Vicar

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

What a Lent, Holy Week and Easter this has been.

If anyone had asked me what I would be giving up for Lent, I would never have answered that I would give up going to Church and give up meeting people.

The Covid 19 virus has had a major impact on life in most parts of the world. We have needed to stay indoors as much as possible and so we have not been able to continue with usual church life as if nothing has happened.

And yet, church has not stopped and we have not given up meeting people.

I love St John's church. There are a few parts of it which mean a great deal to me. I love the St John's Chapel because we gather there after church each Sunday. I love the North Aisle altar because we say Morning Prayer there every day. I love our Chancel with its choir stalls because it reminds me of the monastic tradition of faithful prayer and contemplation which means so much to me. The Sanctuary with the High Altar is my favourite place with all the overtones of Sacrament and God's heavenly courts.

Nonetheless, the church building is not the Church. The Church can be many things, and I am attracted to the New Testament concept of the Church as being *Ekklesia*, the people called out to witness to Christ, to tell of God's love and to care for other people. So, WE are 'the church'.

Church is also about what we do. How we point to Christ in the world by speaking and acting and caring. Someone who I connected with online recently describes church as a verb rather than a noun. Church is a 'doing' word rather than a 'person, place or thing'.

And we have been doing.

We have taken our services online. Every Sunday at 10 am for 10 minutes and every evening in Holy Week for 15 minutes we held a service specifically designed for the internet. We still gather albeit online rather than in St John's. We still hear God's word and we still pray. We still care for each other judging by the supportive comments on Facebook and YouTube. On Sundays we have around 70 people who take part in the whole service. There are around 150 more who stay for a short while. For the evenings in Holy Week the attendance was only slightly smaller.

Whilst I have led our social media outreach, Rev'd Lorna has been phoning and e-mailing as many parishioners as possible as well as contributing to our online services. I know that many of you will have been phoning and texting members of the congregation and neighbours to offer support and pastoral care. Ruth, Evan and Richard have been caring for our building and its finances. Philip our organist has been phoning some members of the congregation who do not have internet access and relaying the services to them down the telephone wire.

... From the Vicar

There is much that we need to develop. We need to be a church for today's times and today's situation. We have to work out how people without internet can take part in services. Maybe you can phone someone and relay the service down the telephone line? We need to see whether we can provide some worship materials for use at home. We are working on it.

We have to address our financial situation. Over two-thirds of our income has disappeared. We no longer have a collection at services. We no longer get donations from people who visit St John's or who light a candle. We no longer have any income from the TeaSpot. Bluntly, if we do not receive online donations we cannot survive.

If you do not already support St John's by a Direct Debit through the Gift Direct scheme, please sign up now. If you would like to give a one-off donation, please use Give.Net. You will find the details below. Please do this now if you possibly can.

We know that some members of our community cannot afford to give to St John's. Be sure and know that you are loved. You are as much a part of this community as anyone else. So please do not feel pressure to do something which you cannot afford. Quite rightly, I will never know who contributes and who responds to this appeal.

We are adapting to the changed circumstances of our times. God is with us and we must continue to walk with God. We cannot tell where this will lead us but that has been true for generations of people through the ages.

Let us stay committed to our Christian Calling. Let us step out in faith together and walk towards the face of God.

With love and blessings,
Sarah

Gift Direct

The Church in Wales has a secure and professional system called Gift Direct. This enables you to set up a regular donation from your Bank or Building Society account direct to St John's. There are no fees. It costs you and the parish nothing. All the money you give comes directly to us. This is our preferred method for regular contributions. Please [click here](#) for an explanation of the system and to set it up now.

Give.Net

Our Donation site for one-off donations is here. Please [click this link](#) if you would like to make a one-off donation now. (You can also make regular donations here but our preferred method for regular donations is Gift Direct above).

The Church during Lockdown

Just because the church is closed, it doesn't mean that there is no work to do for the priest and the church officers. Indeed the opposite is true. Sarah and her team have been working especially hard to keep the ministry and the operation of the church running under strange and difficult circumstances. There is still post to be dealt with, contact and communications operating, bills to be paid, and the security of the building to be maintained. Sarah is to be congratulated on her initiative in organising and running Sunday worship in a new form, making a live broadcast '10 at 10' on Sunday mornings over the Internet using the new forms of social media communication, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. You are encouraged to 'tune in' to these, using the links as follows.

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnthebaptistcardiffcitycentre>

<https://twitter.com/stjohnscardiff>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOrcPof3-UBNzPfJZZ1m9bA>

The live transmission is found at 10am on Sundays, and it can be viewed later on the other media. Although live, it includes some recorded parts, and involves other members of our community besides Sarah herself. Sarah has had to work hard to quickly learn how to use the special software that is used to create the transmission. Many of the churches of the diocese are doing things to get some form of Sunday worship to their people on Sundays. A list can be found on the diocesan website. St John's is special in that it is live while many of the others are pre-recorded. It has had a good response with more than 70 followers on the first broadcast, not all of them in Cardiff. If you have internet access, do join us on Facebook at 10am each Sunday, or if you can't, look at the recordings later.

Ash Wednesday and Lent

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, when the mood turns from the joy of the nativity to the sorrow of the cross. It is marked by the service of Ashing, at which with the application of ashes to our foreheads we are reminded that 'dust we are, and to dust we shall return'. Two services were held at St John's, in middle day, and in the evening. We each have our own form of penance during Lent, be it giving up chocolate, or deep daily devotion, to remind us of our own sinful nature, and come into a closer relationship with our maker.

During Lent Sarah recommended us to read and follow a study booklet "#Live Lent, Care for God's Creation." This contains a small daily devotion relating particularly to the created world around us, and how we should rejoice in it and care for it. For each day there is a Bible reading, a reflection and an action, to make us more aware of the issues of our world. Many of our congregation have bought the booklet and taken up this "40-day challenge".

Parish News ...

Palm Sunday and Holy Week

Regrettably under the present restrictions we were unable to come together to mark the events in the week leading up to Easter. There was no procession around the church on Palm Sunday, nor daily evening devotions, nor Eucharist of the Last Supper with washing of feet on Maundy Thursday. That most important of services, the Three Hours on Good Friday was not possible. In their place, Canon Sarah has turned to the internet, with a live stream of a short worship each evening of Holy Week. For all that, God is still with us, even if we are not able to express it in the usual way in our house of worship. It may be a long time before we next meet together in our building, but we can still be together on screen, by phone, and in our hearts.

New Heating Boiler

After the troubles of the autumn, the new heating boiler seems to have got us through the winter. With the church closed and spring arriving there is no need for heating until autumn. We hope by then we will have the church open again.

Organ and Chamber Concerts

The regular lunchtime organ concerts for the first three months of the year were all successful and well attended. In January we heard on the organ a varied programme from Sarah Baldock from Cheltenham, and in February music by Meirion Wynn Jones of Carmarthen. The March recital was by Dr. Relf Clark of Didcot, the author of the recently published book on the history of the organs of St John's. His programme was specially arranged to show the great versatility of our fine Henry Willis instrument. Copies of his book are still available for sale. The first two months there were also two lunchtime chamber concerts by students of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, a newly started monthly series. In January was the Adastri Trio, and in February the Lunar Quartet. In March we should have heard the Millennium Brass, but it had to be cancelled at the last minute because of the Coronavirus outbreak. This has sadly led to the cancellation of future concerts. In the case of the organ, the next three concerts for April May and June are definitely cancelled. Beyond then we shall have to wait and see. Once the church reopens, the 2020 programme will recommence, and it is intended to rebook the respective organists from the cancelled concerts in next year's programme. The future of the chamber concerts is uncertain. The series was to end in May, at the conclusion of the academic year. Whether the series will be able to restart on October at start of term, or next January, will remain to be seen. This is a great disappointment for both the performers and for the prospective audiences.

Church Finances

So long as the church is closed, it faces a major loss of income. With no tea-room and no-one coming in through the door, all the support we have from people coming in for worship, prayer, and refreshment has suddenly stopped dead. The reserves the church can call on are decidedly limited, and could become exhausted if the closure goes on too long. If this happened, the whole future of our church as a place of worship could be at risk. In recent times, some of our people have changed from putting their offering in the plate each Sunday to more up-to-date ways of giving. In particular, the Church in Wales has fairly recently set up a scheme for regular monthly donations by direct debit. Revd. Sarah has sent an email to all the people she could find to ask them to think about new ways of giving. She also gives some options on page 4. If you have not already done so, now is the time to consider how you could support the church financially in a way other than putting cash in the plate or box, which is presently not possible. If enough of our people support us in this way, we can have confidence that our doors will re-open once the restrictions are lifted.

Parish Magazine - The Future.

The Editor Writes.

The next edition of the City Parish Journal will be number 80. It is intended to be my last as editor. I have been producing the St John's Parish Magazine for nearly fourteen years, ever since the City Parish was formed by the splitting of the former Parish of Central Cardiff into two, with Cathays separating out. I will say I have enjoyed producing this magazine, and also believe it has contributed to the life of the parish. But I am also getting older, and have decided it is time to retire. It leaves a vacancy to be filled. I am sure there must be among our people a younger mind with ideas on how to take it forward. The Journal is in the form of a traditional parish magazine, and it could well continue in this way, for as long as people like to read it. In this hi-tech age there are other ways of spreading news, keeping people informed of what's on and inspiring them to community and worship. It may be that something different would work better today. Either way, the church is looking for someone to come forward to carry the torch that will enlighten the life of our parish and our community. I like to hope that my work has been well received, and I have found it very satisfying as I finish each edition to believe that the job has been worthwhile. So if you believe you could contribute to our parish life in this way, please do not hesitate to make yourself known to Sarah or Me.

Under normal circumstances edition 80 would have been for Pentecost 2020. In the present situation it may have to be postponed to a later date.

Tower News

History repeats itself! Last year we were closed down for 6 months and now it's happened again. The only difference is that it is not just St John's this time. Following advice from the Central Council of Church Bellringers and in the spirit of what the Government has asked, all ringing has ceased throughout the UK with immediate effect. It remains to be seen how long this will last but I'm sure it will be at least as long as our last closure. For safety the bells have now been lowered for the duration and many thanks to Evan for dealing with this. It's a job I have done myself before now on finding they needed to be down and we had forgotten to do this at the end of a ringing session! Luckily, lowering the bells requires considerably less energy than raising them.

With church services also now suspended I guess there will be few, if any, of you who are at St John's at a time when you might have expected to hear the bells. But if you are, please think of us who would also like to be there announcing that the church is still alive and well.

Dare I say "watch this space"? Please stay safe and we'll see you when life returns to normal.

Bob Hardy

A Closed Church

It is with great sadness that we have closed our church. This had to be done at the instruction of the bishops to protect people from the virus that is affecting us all. We like to keep St John's open for all the people of Cardiff, and visitors from afar, who can find within our doors a place of rest, solace and contemplation. Here they can sit and pray, connect with God, ease their minds, or just find peace. At times when the church is open there are many hundreds of people who call into St. Johns to light a candle, and say their personal prayers, and those folks who leave their prayers on the prayer board for us to pray with them and for them. Normally we use these prayers from the prayer board on a Monday as part of Word for the City. I think particularly of those who live on their own and would come in by bus to St. Johns, and pray awhile. Those who are worried about members of their family, those awaiting hospital results, etc. Even while we have to stay at home it would be to their comfort if we could all remember them in our prayers at this very difficult time.

Gaynor Stogdon

This article was written before the closure of the church, and it has been amended accordingly. - Ed.

St David's Day

Lord Mayor's Civic Service.

Saint David's Day, our Welsh national day on 1st March, is the occasion when mayors and civic dignitaries from all over Wales meet to celebrate our Patron Saint. This year, as most years, they assembled in St John's for the civic service before the reception in the City Hall. This year the 1st March fell on a Sunday, so in the morning we had to hold two services, with the civic service following closely on the normal Sunday Eucharist. This needed quite a tight turnaround between the two, so the usual after-service tea and coffee had to be dropped, to give enough time for the second congregation to get in and take their seats in good time. It gave the bell-ringers double duty as they rang before both services. For the occasion, the church was bedecked with a thousand daffodils, the national flower of Wales.

At the beginning of the service, the Right Hon. Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Cllr. Dan De'Ath entered to the sound of a fanfare, accompanied by the civic mace. With everybody standing, the congregation sang the opening hymn, *Calon Lân*. The welcome and invitation to prayer was given by Canon Sarah, then the Scripture Readings were given by the Lord Mayor, and by the leader of Cardiff Council, Cllr. Huw Thomas, with a musical interlude by singers from the County & Vale music service. The address was given by the Most Reverend John Davies, Archbishop of Wales. Following this was singing by the Cardiff Military Wives Choir.



The Archbishop of Wales gives the Address

The prayers of Thanksgiving and Hope were led by the Chaplain to the Council, Revd. Canon Stewart Lisk, with prayers in both Welsh and English delivered by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan Morfudd Meredith; Michael Rye, president of the Consular Association in Wales; Mr. Huw Jones, representing the Welsh Language churches of Cardiff; Revd. Gavin Smith, Chaplain of the Welsh Brigade; and Mutale Merrill representing the Lord Mayor's Charities. After the closing hymn, all stood for the blessing delivered jointly by John Davies, Archbishop of Wales, and Most Revd. George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff. The service closed with the National Anthems and the recessional procession to organ music. The annual Mayoral service is an important occasion for the city, the church and for Wales, and thanks were given for all the people who worked to make it a success.

Around the Parish

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at St John's Church.
(029) 2039 5231

Priest-in-Charge

Revd. Sarah Jones,
16 Queen Anne Square,
Cardiff, CF10 3ED
(029) 2022 4956

Assistant Curate

Revd. Lorna Hanney

Church Wardens

Evan Chapman (029) 2045 1519
Ruth Livingstone (029) 2045 4743

P C C Secretary

Evan Chapman

P C C Treasurer

Richard Hall

Verger

Evan Chapman

Organist

Philip Thomas

Tower Captain

Bob Hardy

Sunday School

Norma Thomas

Website: <http://www.stjohnscardiff.wales>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnthebaptistcardiffcitycentre>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stjohnscardiff>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOrcPof3-UBNzPfJZZ1m9bA>

St John's church is currently closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.
Normal opening times, daily on weekdays 10am-3pm for visitors and private prayer.

Regular Service Times

All services are suspended and the church is closed until the end of restrictions

Sundays

St John's

10.00 am Sung Eucharist
10.00 am Sunday School
6.00 pm Evensong

On Line

While the church remains closed,
join us online each Sunday at 10 am
on Facebook or YouTube for a live-
stream of worship. (See *link above*.)

Weekdays

Daily (Mon:Tue:Wed:Fri.) 10.00am
Prayer in the City

Monday 12.30pm

Word for the City

Tuesday 12.45pm Lunchbreak

6.00pm Contemplation

Wednesday 12.30pm Holy Eucharist

Thursday 12.30pm - 2.00pm

Chaplain on duty

Friday 12.00pm Holy Eucharist

Diary Dates

(As the church must remain closed, no events are shown.)

April

Sun 12th	EASTER DAY
Sun 19th	Second Sunday of Easter - (Low Sunday - 1st after Easter)
Thu 23rd	ST GEORGE
Sat 25th	ST MARK
Sun 26th	Third Sunday of Easter - (2nd after Easter)

May

Fri 1st	SS PHILIP AND JAMES
Sun 3rd	Fourth Sunday of Easter - (3rd after Easter)
Sun 10th	Fifth Sunday of Easter - (4th after Easter) Christian Aid Week begins.
Thu 14th	ST MATTHIAS
Sun 17th	Sixth Sunday of Easter (5th after Easter) - Rogation Sunday
Thu 21st	ASCENSION DAY
Sun 24th	Seventh Sunday of Easter - Sunday after Ascension
Sun 31st	PENTECOST (WHIT SUNDAY)

June

Mon 1st	Visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth.
Sun 7th	TRINITY SUNDAY
Thu 11th	THANKSGIVING FOR HOLY COMMUNION
Fri 12th	ST BARNABAS (<i>Moved from 11th</i>)
Sun 14th	First Sunday after Trinity
Sun 21st	Second Sunday after Trinity
Wed 24th	ST JOHN THE BAPTIST Patronal Festival
Sun 28th	Third Sunday after Trinity
Mon 29th	ST PETER & ST PAUL

Events at St John's, Cardiff.

Due to the required closure of the church during the coronavirus pandemic, all planned events for the next few months have been cancelled. Announcements will be made at such time as events can recommence.

Verses from Psalm 46.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, and the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; she shall not be moved. God will help her at break of day.

The nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Be still and know that I am God; I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth.

The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

FOR TIMES OF SERVICES AND PARISH DIRECTORY SEE PAGE 10

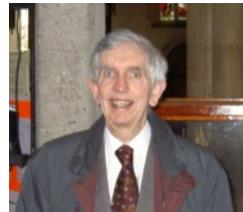
Some of our team members



Ross Pilliner
PCC Member



Renda Thomas
Server



Richard Hall
Hon Treasurer