

## **FRIENDS OF CHRIST CHURCH, SWINDON: ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

### **Future**

#### **Stained glass**

At the instigation of Janet French, Friends trustee, Mike Snow, an expert on stained glass, visited Christ Church recently. He noticed that the “Render unto Caesar” window at the east end of the south aisle was very badly damaged and recommended that it be repaired urgently. The Friends are liaising with the Buildings Committee on this. We intend to use Pamela Bridgeman’s legacy to contribute to the funding of this repair in due course.

#### **Organ scholarship**

The Friends are also involved in administering an organ scholarship at Christ Church (with no financial commitment). A local individual, Jacob Allinson, is sponsoring a young person’s organ lessons from Tim Eyles, Director of Music at Christ Church. These lessons are making good use of all the money the Friends have spent on the organ in the last few years (our 2019 newsletter mentions a figure of £50,000).

### **Conclusion**

We have received generous support from the members through subscriptions and donations, and the trustees express their heartfelt thanks to everyone. I am pleased that 2024 has been a successful year for the Friends. The Friends is a worthwhile and popular charity doing good work for the church and the community. The trustees are friendly and helpful and I thank them for their ongoing loyal support.

**Chris Smith**

**Chair, Friends of Christ Church, Swindon**

**25 March 2025**

## **FRIENDS OF CHRIST CHURCH, SWINDON: ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

Before turning to official business, we are sad to report the death of Margaret Williams, MBE, on Ash Wednesday 5 March. Margaret was the first chair of the Friends of Christ Church in 2001, and has served as a trustee ever since. Her clear thinking and practical support of the Friends was always there, without fail. We will all miss her very much.



#### **Friends finance**

The charity’s income in 2024 was £7934 (including a legacy – see below) and the expenditure was £2445 resulting in a surplus of £5519 (2023 surplus £959). Reserves now stand at £8568 (2023 £3049).

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### **Charity Christmas Market**

The most important Friends event of 2024 was the Charity Christmas Market held on 30 November. I opened it, accompanied by the Mayor, Councillor Imtiyaz Shaikh, the Revd Canon Simon Stevenette, Vicar of Christ Church, and Father Christmas from Swindon Lions.

The market was a great success with lots of positive feedback. The 32 charities and community organisations who attended in 2024 retained all their proceeds, in total over £4200, consistent with previous years.

The trustees would like to thank the community centre team for providing refreshments, the bell ringers for opening the tower and all those who helped. We also thank the church choir for performing during the event.

The Friends raffle at the market raised £436; thanks to everyone who donated prizes especially Barnes Coaches, Cliff and Maureen Puffett, Angela and Nigel Ruck and Arline Stovell. Mulled wine was provided by Helping Hands a local charity. Outside caterers, Food for Thought provided food; they and other participating charities made generous donations to the Friends.

### **Income and Events**

Former trustee Pamela Bridgeman bequeathed a generous legacy of £5000 to the Friends. This bequest has required a rethink of the charity's reserves policy. This sum has been placed in a savings account, together with the £396 from donations at Pamela's funeral. We will retain these sums in anticipation of a major project in memory of Pamela (see below).

### **Books and Cards**

The book "The Beacon on the Hill" written by Mark Bridgeman was launched in December 2020 and sales continued during 2024. The book is a rewrite and update of the original history of Christ Church, "The Old Lady on the Hill", written by Brian

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There are two units, each with a countertop covering tidy storage cupboards which store cups and plates etc, suitable for the level of service provided. A secure place for an urn helps to provide hot water for teas and coffees. One unit includes a sink for washing up, with a pump and receptacle for grey water. Both units are made of solid hardwood and are on lockable castors so that they are secure in use but can be moved as required. The provision has been much used and much appreciated by all those who use the church for events.



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The Friends Annual Lecture followed the AGM on 17 April. Entitled "Resurrection Art Around the World", the Revd Robert Jordan, Minister at Immanuel United Reformed Church, spoke about his tour of art galleries featuring scenes of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We served tea and coffee at the Swindon Music Festival Christ Church evening in March 2024, and at the Passiontide organ recital on 27 March. Profits of £37.50 were made from refreshment sales at the organ recital in Christ Church on 5 June which was part of the Old Town Festival.

Tea and sandwiches were provided to the bellringers and Christ Church Choir before Choral Evensongs in May, July and September, and before two Carol services, the Partnership Advent service on 1 December and the Lessons and Carols service on 22 December, for which we also paid for the professional conductor.

We provided post funeral refreshments for the late Pamela Bridgeman and Rosemary Williams in 2024.

And the Friends contributed to the cost of the geraniums in the west flower beds, and purchased a new Diocesan flag to fly on the flagpole at the west end of the church.

### **Expenditure**

#### **New Kitchen in Church**

The church is being used more and more for concerts and similar events where refreshments are served to listeners. Churchwarden Simon Giles arranged the provision of new moveable kitchen units in the north west corner of the church to facilitate this. The Friends contributed half of the cost.

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Bridgeman (Mark's father) and Teresa Squires. It also contains some original material researched by Mark, and contributions from members of the congregation of Christ Church with St Mary's. The book is available from the trustees, the Christ Church Parish Office, the Central Library and Bert's Books in Old Town

The postcards of the stained glass windows showing the train in the south porch and the green parrot in the Goddard window in the north transept are still available. More cards featuring the Mother and Child window in the Lady Chapel (see below) were printed during 2024. Books and cards are available from the trustees or the parish office.



Photo: Janet French

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**INCOME**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Subscriptions	370	334
Donations	1487	1903
Sales	95	233
Fundraising	1012	850
Legacy	5000	
Total	7964	3320

**EXPENDITURE**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Flag	96	
Moveable kitchen	1500	
Churchyard	90	200
Notice boards		285
Funeral teas	267	
Kitchen Trolley		431
Outside pathway lighting		500
Organ presentation		200
Carol Books		220
Stepladder		148
Printing cards	78	
Office/AGM costs	4	69
Choir teas	140	216
Fundraising costs		175
Conductor at carol service	270	
Creditor reversal previous year		(83)
Total	2445	2361

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**BALANCE SHEET**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Bank Balance	8568	3049
Total assets less liabilities All unrestricted funds	8568	3049

Approved by K Liston, Independent Examiner 13 February 2025

Accounts approved by the Board on 25 March 2025

Signed on behalf of Trustees CAS

**Friends of Christ Church Trustees 2024**

Reverend Canon Simon Stevenette (Clergy Member)

Simon Giles (Joint Warden Member)

Sheila Wright (Joint Warden Member)

Chris Smith (Chair)

Daniel Pitt (Vice-Chair)

Juliya Kablak (Hon. Treasurer)

Christine Senior (Hon. Secretary and Membership Secretary)

Stephen Austin

Lyn Eggers

Janet French

Caroline Pitt

Margaret Williams, MBE (until March 2025)

Address: c/o Parish office, Community Centre@Christ Church,  
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