

The people of Christchurch are rightly proud of their Priory Church. It is an iconic building set in the midst of our community. Prayer has been offered and the Christian faith proclaimed for over 900 years in this place. Help us to maintain this house of prayer so that we can pass on to future generation the heritage which we have received and enjoy.

The Priory Church is a centre of worship and prayer for many people from the surrounding areas, reaching well beyond the borough of Christchurch. We strive for excellence in all that we do, in worship, music, theatre or drama. Your support is especially welcome as we receive no funding from the Church or from the State.

The Priory is not only a historic building, it is the home of a Christian community living and working within the wider local community. Your prayer and support is vital if the work of the church is to continue in future generations.

By becoming a Friend of the Priory Church, you will help us further the mission and ministry of the church in Christchurch today, and also enable us to maintain this beautiful and historic house of prayer so that others may come to be inspired by it. It is your prayer, financial support and generosity that will enable us to hand on to generations to come the wonderful heritage that we enjoy today.

AIMS

The Friends of the Priory Church was formed to...

- Assist in the repair, conservation and improvement of the fabric, the Churchyard and the historically valuable artefacts of the ancient Priory Church.
- To stimulate interest in the Priory Church.
- To encourage and support activities calculated to preserve and beautify the Priory Church.
- To make gifts for the benefit of the Priory Church as the Committee may authorise.
- To aid with the administration and its work.

SOME OF THE GIFTS MADE

- Four stalls for the Girls' Choir
- Wardrobe for Choir robes
- Two computers for choir staff
- Grand piano for the Church
- Stained glass window and Altar table in St Stephen's Chapel
- Modern choir hymn and carol books
- Answer phone and fax machine for the Parish Office
- Power Point enabled projector and screen for Priory Hall
- A substantial contribution towards the cost of an upgraded sound system for the Church

THE FRIENDS OF THE PRIORY CHURCH CHRISTCHURCH



**Become a Friend and help
this ancient Priory Church**

(Reg. Charity No. 1063246)

A brief history of the Priory Church



Christians have worshipped on this site for more than 1,400 years. It was over 900 years ago in 1094 that Ranulf Flambard, a friend of William Rufus, and later the Bishop of Durham, began to build the great Church we see today.

By 1150 when Pope Eugenius established the Order of Augustinian Canons here at the request of Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester and Baldwin de Redvers, the Church was substantially complete with a central tower and spire. The Church's fame was already so widespread, with its Miraculous Beam, its growing library of illuminated manuscripts and many works of healing, that the old Royal Burgh of Twynham was becoming known as 'Christchurch'.

By 1210 the first of many misericords had been carved for the monk's stalls and 150 years later the Jesse screen in the Great Quire was in place, with the Lady Chapel being built 30 years later. After the central tower fell in about 1420, a Western tower was

added to hold the bells, which were already 50 years old. The Quire was rebuilt in the early 16th century.

Like most monasteries, the Priory Church suffered at the hands of Henry VIII and the conventual buildings were destroyed. Though the last Prior, John Draper had to surrender its treasures, the Church was saved and granted to the townsfolk. It has continued to serve the community ever since.

Over the centuries this Parish Church has given sanctuary to citizens during the civil war between Stephen and Matilda, sheltered Cromwell's soldiers, provided a school from about 1140, first in its cloisters and later in St. Michael's Loft and cared for the sick and poor. Primarily, however, it has been a place of worship and inspiration in peace and war to those from around the world.

Today the Friends and others still work to maintain it as a fitting House of God where all are welcome.



PLEASE SUPPORT US

APPLICATION FORM

One Form per person

Rates of Subscription with effect from January 2016

Ordinary Membership (per annum) £10.00

Life Membership (per person) £80.00

I wish to become a(n)

Ordinary member

Life Member

I enclose a Cheque/Postal Order/Cash £.....

*Please make cheques payable to
'Friends of the Priory Church'*

**I pay UK income Tax. Please regard this
and any future payment as Gift Aid**

Mr/Mrs/Miss

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____ Date _____

Tel.No _____

Email _____

Please return to:

Hon. Membership Secretary
Friends of the Priory Church
The Parish Office
Quay Road
Christchurch, Dorset
BH23 1BU