

From the retiring Chairman of the Friends**Summer – 2025**

Dear Friends,

NEW CHAIRMAN

There are changes afoot in our committee and I am delighted to inform you that at our latest meeting in early July we appointed a successor to myself as chairman. He is Guy Milton, a former senior civil servant in the EU Council of Ministers, now retired and living in the UK. His appointment was proposed by Bishop Robert and unanimously endorsed by the committee. While working at the EU Council of Ministers, Guy served at one point as a churchwarden at Holy Trinity Brussels (when Bishop Robert was chaplain) and in the course of an international career he has worshipped at other churches in the diocese. So, he is admirably qualified to take on the chairmanship and looks forward to continuing and further developing the valuable work which – thanks to your donations – the Friends are able to undertake in support of the diocese.

ANNUAL SERVICE – 21 OCTOBER 2025

A first opportunity for many of you to meet Guy Milton will be at our Annual Service, which I can confirm will take place on **Tuesday 21 October 2025 in Southwark Cathedral, London SE1**. It will take the form of a Sung Evensong **starting at 5:30pm**, followed by a reception. Both Bishop Robert and our new suffragan, Bishop Andrew Norman, are planning to attend. I do hope that as many as possible of you will come – and if you do intend to do so, it would be good if you could let Jeanne French know in advance (email address below) to help plan numbers at the reception.

ENVOI

Having served as your chairman for over 10 years, it's certainly time to move on (indeed, probably well past it!). But I won't be leaving altogether, as I'm staying on the committee for the time being. As Jeanne has kindly allowed me to usurp her role in sending out this summer mailing (together with the accompanying edition of the Prayer Diary), I should like to take the opportunity to say how much I have enjoyed being your chairman and particularly to thank you all most warmly for your financial donations over the years. These have made possible all the useful contributions which the Friends make to the work of the diocese. By way of example, at the recent committee meeting we were able to approve a grant of £1,000 for the diocesan Ministry Experience Scheme. This will help to support four MES interns whose placement and travel costs have greatly increased due to post-Brexit residence requirements. We were also able to approve a grant to assist two stipendiary curates, one of them destined for Kyiv. This grant, topped up by a one-off gift for the Kyiv project from an individual member of the Friends, amounted to over £2,000. In addition, we have continued to award a number of language tuition grants to incoming chaplains and their spouses. None of this would have been possible without you. So, all in all, I think I can safely say that your donations are being put to good use and the whole operation of the Friends is basically in good shape. But there is a proviso – which is that the annual income of the Friends, along with its membership, is gradually decreasing. This is an issue we shall need to address in future. But to keep us on an even keel now, please keep your annual donations coming in – and, if possible, please consider increasing your donation at least in line with inflation.

Hoping to see you on 21 October. With all good wishes, and thanks again for your continuing support,

Mark Pellew