



*Friends of
Cathedral
Music*

COVENTRY NATIONAL GATHERING

8 to 10 JUNE 2018

Safeguarding a priceless heritage

National Gathering in Coventry 8 - 10 June 2018 with AGM on 9th June

The Programme

The summer Gathering incorporating the AGM will run from 1.30pm on Friday 8th June to 5.30pm on Sunday 10th June and will also include a visit to Kenilworth Castle and St Mary's Church, Warwick. The AGM will be held in the Lecture Hall at **Coventry Cathedral** at 1.30pm on Saturday 9th June.

St Michael's Cathedral is Coventry's best-known landmark and visitor attraction. The 14th century church was largely destroyed by German bombing during the Second World War, leaving only the outer walls and spire. At 300 feet (91 metres) high, the spire of St. Michael's is claimed to be the third tallest cathedral spire in England, after Salisbury and Norwich. The new Coventry Cathedral, designed by Sir Basil Spence, was opened in 1962 next to the ruins of the old. The cathedral contains some wonderful stained glass in addition to the tapestry *Christ in Glory* by Graham Sutherland. The bronze statue *St Michael's Victory over the Devil* by Jacob Epstein is mounted on the exterior of the new cathedral near the entrance. We shall explore this fascinating modern cathedral and the shell of the original St Michael's Cathedral bombed in the Second World War and learn about its work as a centre for reconciliation. There will be music from Coventry Cathedral Choir, the chamber choir *Amici*, and some of the choristers in an informal 'coffee concert'.

Friday afternoon will include a visit by coach to Kenilworth Castle and Garden (EH), originally a medieval fortress and later an Elizabethan palace, which has played a large part in England's history over the centuries. This will be followed by a visit to St Mary's Church, Warwick, for Choral Evensong. This is another historic church, with its Norman foundations and the beautiful Beauchamp Chantry (reputedly the finest medieval chapel in England). The Gathering Dinner will be on the Friday at St Mary's Guildhall in Coventry, a stunning venue originally built in the fourteenth century. The guest speaker for the Dinner will be Canon Sarah Hills, the Canon for Reconciliation.

Travel

By train, Coventry is served by Virgin, Cross Country and West Midlands trains with frequent links to Birmingham and London Euston. There are a number of Pay & Display car parks in the centre costing about £1 an hour – the nearest being Cox Street, but a 7-day permit for £17.50 covers most of them and seems the cheapest way if you are taking your car for the three days (ring 0345 5207007 or visit 'wanttopark.com/Coventry'). Most central hotels do not offer car parking. There are 2 Blue Badge bays next to the Cathedral in Bayley Street and a drop-off area outside the main entrance.

Accommodation

The closest hotel to the Cathedral (2 minutes' walk) is the **Britannia Hotel** (0891 222 0095) offering us discounted rates £45 B&B for singles and £55 B&B for doubles (please ring 02476 633686 or email Stacey.bosworth@britanniahotels.com quoting FRCO2607). This hotel is handy but fairly basic. This will be the venue for our Sunday lunch. Slightly further away (8 - 10 mins' walk) but quite near the railway station is **Ibis City Centre** (024 7625 0500) offering room only at £70 if you quote 'FCM'. There is a **Premier Inn** near the shopping centre (about 12 mins' walk from the Cathedral) with a flexible rate of £112 or saver rate £76.50 for the two nights - room only (tel. 0871 527 8272). Alternatively, there is the **Ramada Hotel** (024 7623 8110) about 15 minutes' walk, with a price of £65 (S) or £75 (D) per night room only. There are a number of reasonably priced guest houses near the railway station.

National Gathering for autumn 2018

The autumn Gathering from **12 to 14 October** will centre around **Bangor Cathedral in North Wales**. We shall learn of the recruitment difficulties facing the Director of Music in this impoverished part of rural North Wales and their Outreach programme which has recently been aided by the Diamond Fund for Choristers. We shall also take a coach trip to the nearby seaside resort of Llandudno to visit an affluent Victorian church, take a Victorian tram ride up the Great Orme and enjoy a Choral Workshop, before returning to Bangor for a cheese and wine tasting.

Gatherings for 2019

22 – 24 March – Newport and Monmouth

31 May – 2 June - Hampton Court Palace and St George's Chapel Windsor (with AGM on 1st June)

4 – 6 October - Edinburgh

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