

The Old Church News

O P E N T O A L L - O P E N T O G O D

VICAR'S VOICE

Cardinal Basil Hume (in his book *The Mystery of the Cross* pub by D.L.T. in 1998) wrote: "There must be in everybody's life an attempt to find some space in the day for prayer, however brief. It is normally in prayer that our awareness of God and our desire are awakened" (page 49). Our Christian faith and witness is based on prayer and praying. We do this individually (as part of the "orchestra") but we do so corporately – together. In the communion service, after hearing the Word (readings from the Bible and declaring the Creed of Christian Faith), then we are lead by intercession: prayers for others, for the world and for the named and unnamed (as lead and as placed upon the prayer cushion in *The Old Church*). But there is another time for praying together – as in a group. Every last Thursday of each month at 2.30pm (convened by Rosemary Guest) in the church we gather and pray together (lead, shared or silent sharing). As praying is the rock of our relationship with God and He with us might we not be able to develop this more as a congregation? There are plenty of opportunities in *each* week to come together to pray: Could you put yourself forward to convene a time and enable others (from our church and others, or none) to share, just for a brief time together in prayer, in communion with God and He with us. The heartbeat of all we do as Christians

here is prayers for the world (and for those in need, remembering to give thanks as well). Let that heartbeat be the shared rhythm of our week, every month. Tell the Vicar you would like to give it a try!

MESSAGE FROM BARBARA

It is with great sadness that I have relinquished my role as Honorary Assistant Priest at Smethwick Old Church and I would like you all to know how much I have appreciated your support and encouragement in my ministry over the last fifteen years. I especially remember your kindness as I took my first faltering steps as an ordained deacon and then priest.

It has been a privilege and a joy to have been able to serve you through what has been for me an incredibly fulfilling ministry and to have watched the church family grow and develop in so many ways over the years to become the vibrant, worshipping community we now are. I hope to remain at Old Church as a member of the congregation and to continue to participate in the life of the church. My thanks and love to you all.

PAST MONTH'S NEWS

It was a glorious sunny day when folk from *The Old Church* and *St Matthew's* enjoyed an outing to Shugborough Hall, the ancestral home to the Earls of Lichfield.

A step back to a bygone age allowed all to experience the upstairs and downstairs of the 18th century Mansion House and to enjoy stories of what life was like at this only complete working historic estate. The group were fortunate to be able to explore the Shugborough Country Show also taking place that weekend.

The threat of rain did not deter the celebration of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Feast Day where fellowship was shared during communion and afterwards with a barbeque in the Vicarage garden.

Following her holiday to Grenada, Theresa hosted a Caribbean evening for Thrifties. The sun shone down on aptly dressed ladies as they sipped tropical cocktails, feasted on jerk chicken and rice whilst the strains of Bob Marley wafted gently on the evening air.

Q.I... "CHRISTIAN PRAYER"

- Rests on two foundations: belief in God both transcendent and personal as revealed in the Bible as Lord of History and creator of the World; and the acceptance of the intimate relation of God and us disclosed by Christ
- Prayers express the relationship God has given us to himself in Christ
- Adoration, thanksgiving, penitence and petition are therefore acts directed by us as Christians to God through Jesus Christ our Lord – or “made in the Spirit” (see the Letter of Jude 20).
- It is personal (“I”) and corporate (“we”).
- It is intercourse - our communion with God and His with us!
- Jesus dared to speak of God in terms of fatherhood and kingship; that is to say, of love and authority.
- When we pray, it may be an individual voice but one joining in an orchestra (the whole Church of God)
- When we approach God, we do so in a waiting attitude of expectation; as with Christian faith, we have a forward-looking hope!
- A notice outside a room should not state “Quiet! Christian at prayer” but “Look out! *God* at work!” (per Donald Coggan in his book *The Heart of the Christian Faith* pub by Collins 1986)

O God, lead us from death to life,
 from falsehood to truth.
 Lead us from despair to hope,
 from fear to trust.
 Lead us from hate to love,
 from war to peace.
 Let peace fill our hearts,
 our world, our universe.
 Amen

Satish Kumar

CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOP

A local Christian bookshop “Angels and Angles” formerly located in Blackheath can now be found in Paul and Barny’s Place which is a church sponsored cafe and community outreach centre based at 151 Castle Road West, Oldbury.
 Opening times: Monday - Friday
 10.30 am - 1.00 pm.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Saturday 8th October
 Harvest Festival Supper and Talent Show in the Dorothy Parkes Centre

Sunday 9th October 10.15 am Joint Harvest Festival in Old Church with food offerings donated to “Brushstrokes”.

Sunday 9th October 6.00 pm
 Celebration in this 400th year of the King James Bible Sung (1662) Holy Communion service with an opportunity for those who wish to practise an anthem at 5.00 pm and the responses for the service at 5.30 pm



SEPTEMBER

- | | |
|------|--|
| 4th | 3.00 pm Pimms' Party in the Vicarage garden |
| 5th | School term begins |
| 7th | 2.30 pm Light Reading group at the Sisters' house. Newcomers welcome. |
| 10th | 3.00 pm Wedding of Lee Ogilby and Kelly Sutherland (at St Matthews) |
| 11th | 5.00 pm Nine Readings and Hymns to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible |
| 12th | Clergy from Warley Deanery Residential Conference |
| 14th | 11.00 am Songs of Praise at Penmakers' Court. All are welcome. |
| 15th | Reader's Training Induction Day |
| 15th | Discoverers' trip to Ruskin Glass Centre. |
| 16th | 1.00 pm Wedding of Roger Scriven and Pollet Smith |
| 17th | 2.00 pm Table Top Sale in the Dorothy Parkes Community Centre |
| 18th | 10.00 am St Matthew the Apostle : all attend St Matthews (NO communion service at Old Church) |
| 29th | 2.30 pm Intercessory Praying in church |