

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

“O God our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come, Our shelter from the stormy blast/ be thou our guard while troubles last, And our eternal home.”

The first and last verse of the hymn we shall probably sing on Remembrance Sunday – and which pledges God’s depth of Love for us and His act of salvation, both here and in the future: a new earth and a new heaven. Embedded in remembrance is remembering people, some of them close to us, who have lost lives for their country and for values of freedom, democracy, peace; it also contains respect, honour, thankfulness to God for deliverance in dangerous times in our histories. But it is further an opportunity to reflect on how it is that in a world which we believe to be governed and directed by the rule of God, wars have (and are) possible; it is an expression of our deepest longings for peace and safety.

The questions raised on Remembrance Day may be deeply personal. When we confront the reality of war, and express our longings for peace, we connect with the things that deflect ourselves from experiencing peace: the violence we may have experienced, or the acknowledgment of the capacity for violence within myself, the wrong suffered and the capacity to wrong and create suffering in

another, the hurt in our lives which can cloud judgement and quell our capacity to love.

Remembrance Day is a moment for naming painful things. But not to increase feelings of guilt or inadequacy; rather, we believe that it is around the Lord’s table, in fellowship with one another, in the presence of a loving God, we shall find strength to change things which need changing, and so thus be transformed and to be healed. A personal journey but one we pray too for God’s created world. A poppy for Remembrance Day is merely the symbol for such a prayer.

“Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame, From everlasting thou art God, To endless years the same.” (verse 3 of that same hymn)

COMMUNITY CHOIR

A few members of Old Church have recently joined the community choir “Singwell in Sandwell” that practises on Thursdays between 4.30 and 6.00 pm at the Dorothy Parkes Centre. We are rehearsing Christmas songs and have three performances booked. The choir covers a wide age range (from 17 to 80 years) and would welcome new members who enjoy singing for pleasure. For further details contact the Dorothy Parkes’ Centre. (Telephone 0121 558 2998)

PAST MONTH'S NEWS

At the beginning of October the Harvest Supper and Talent Show was an evening of fellowship and fun for brothers and sisters from The Old Church, St Matthews and Holy Trinity. A variety of talent included storytelling, poetry, comedy and musical items that were superbly compered by Hope and Jack.

The Harvest celebrations continued on Sunday morning in The Old Church which was suitably adorned with autumnal floral displays. The generous donations of food created a grand

display in front of the altar and were gratefully received by Brushstrokes to support their work with asylum seekers, refugees and others in need.

Later in the day a choir formed to rehearse an anthem and responses for a Choral Holy Communion using the 1662 service. The Rev’d David Gould preached and readings were taken from the 1611 Kings James Bible.

A new opportunity for quiet prayer was introduced during a 7.00 pm Evening service of Compline on the last Thursday of the month.

Q.I.... "SALVATION"

- "I serve a risen saviour, He's in the world today" - Jesus our Saviour!
- The letters of St Paul speak of salvation being a future event when God will judge the world, destroy the wicked and establish his final kingdom on earth - it is the object of Hope!
- This seems to be a continuation of Jewish apocalyptic expectation: the new earth and the new heaven.
- St Mark's Gospel speaks of being saved meaning entry into the kingdom.
- There is a shift of meaning in other biblical writings; in Ephesians "the helmet of salvation" for it has been "by grace you have been saved."
- 1 Corinthians 15.2 speaks the same, although adds: "if you hold fast!"
- When salvation is then spoken of as in the present, "believers" are saved (see 1 Timothy 4.10) or "souls" (1 Peter 1.9)
- The term "Saviour" is applied to Jesus only twice in the four Gospels (Luke 2.11, John 4.42), but the idea is far more frequent, for example St Matthew: the name Jesus means the one who saves his people from their sins (Matthew 1.21); the healing miracles are signs of salvation ("your faith has saved you")
- To understand salvation it is necessary to recognize that something needs to be done to put a situation right (a sinking ship, people trapped in a blazing building require saving!) - for an individual the situation may be as a sinner or we live in the face of death; for the whole creation, of which we are a part and without which we cannot exist.
- Jesus as Saviour saves - through the Cross, through his presence with us now, through the future: All reveal the Love of God the Father for His world and His intimate relationship with it. God will be all in all!
- Through and by grace, Christ saved/ Christ saves/ Christ shall save.

MESSAGE FROM DEB

I have been at the Dorothy Parkes' Centre for nearly six months and I cannot believe that the time has gone so quickly! I want to tell you about some new activities at the centre - "Singwell in Sandwell", the community choir and "Playwell in Sandwell" - is producing a pantomime in February 2012 - both are open to everyone.

The choir is going well and is supported by some members of the congregation. However, we need help with the Pantomime - particularly make-up artists, seamstresses to help with costumes, tea makers and ushers etc to help during performances. If you can help please ring me on 0121 558 2998 or come and see me. If, on the other hand, you fancy "treading the boards" come along to the Centre on Wednesday evenings (7.00 - 8.15 pm).

ADVANCE NOTICE

Christmas Eve in The Old Church

4.00 pm Carols by the crib

11.30 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day: 10am St Matthews

10.15 am The Old Church



OCTOBER

- 30th 10.00 am **All Saints' Service** at St Matthews; 10.15 am The Old Church
- 30th 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm **All Souls' Services** at The Old Church (Candles lit for our Loved ones departed)
- 31st 7.30 pm **Licensing** of Rev'd Mike Sermon as priest in charge and the Reader, Mrs Jill MacDonald as Authorised minister in charge at St James' Round Green - All welcome.

NOVEMBER

- 5th 2.00 pm **Table Top Sale** in the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 7th 7.30 pm **PCC of St Matthews** meet
- 9th 7.30 pm **PCC of The Old Church** meet **in church!**
- 9th **Unity Day** hosted at Holy Trinity to explore locally available resources
- 13th **Remembrance Day Services**
10.00 am St Matthews,
10.15 am The Old Church
- 22nd 7.30 pm **Deanery Synod** meet at St Mary's Bearwood
- 24th 2.30 pm **Praying** in The Old Church
7.00 pm **Evening service of Compline**
- 26th **2.00 pm Christmas Fair** in the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 27th **Advent Sunday**

**The LORD is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?**

**The LORD is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?**

Psalm 27:1