

# 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

At the time of writing, the protesters sit still on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral in London, the Dean and Chancellor have both resigned from their posts and the Bishop of London has just declared that "Christians are used to near-death experiences: St Paul's itself once burnt down; but that resurrection experiences come too: the phoenix rising is a symbol."

So is the Cross of course: of salvation and of God's grace working amongst us through the risen Lord Jesus Christ (whose "coming" we wait for this Advent both at Christmas-birth and at the end of Time, his second-coming). The media, and others, have voiced, in the current situation, but "what would Jesus do?" Yet Jesus often wrong-footed his followers and critics: some who call me 'Lord, Lord' will not enter the Kingdom of heaven; many are called, but few are chosen; why do you call me 'good'?

There is little doubt that the Church (and so, us) should look at what we do, with true integrity, in the name of Jesus Christ. Important matters, such as, how we view the society in which we live, is our country fair and just for all, are we inclusive, really, and have we a personal integrity as we dare to call ourselves friends of Jesus, "in Christ" (as St Paul will have us called, to merit the term "christian")?

Each of us ought to take space (and time) to reflect upon such a true character of our Christianity and our calling. The season of Advent in its "waiting" may provide just that – for us as "Church" and for others, who may not believe but who, similarly, are concerned with such (and more) important matters of living with our neighbour and with ourself.

## YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU

A new rota of duties is being prepared for the first quarter of 2012. Illness, incapacity and other responsibilities have resulted in a number of roles being undertaken by fewer and fewer people.

We need people who are willing to arrive at church by 9.45 am to act as sidespeople. We need someone to set up the kitchen and foyer in the Dorothy Parkes' Centre for coffee after the service and to take responsibility for the supplies. We need people to serve the refreshments. We need people to clean the Church and at least four more flower arrangers.

Please consider what you can do to help; the more people that volunteer the less frequently will you have to fulfil your commitment. Whatever you can do, will be valued. Please talk to the churchwardens or David Ingram about what is required.

## PAST MONTH'S NEWS

A variety of merchandise was on offer to all who attended the Table Top Sale at the beginning of the month. The proceeds from this event helped boost church funds.

Two minutes silence was a poignant feature of a reflective service on Remembrance Sunday when a new wreath was blessed and placed beneath the Roll of Honour.

A day conference designed to renew and encourage relationships across all sectors of the community was held in Holy Trinity. Speakers

included the Bishop of Birmingham as well as representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations. Those who attended found it to be an informative and uplifting experience.

Father Christmas made an early appearance this month when he opened The Old Church's annual Christmas Fayre in the Dorothy Parkes' Centre. The choir of Uplands Manor Primary School performed a variety of Christmas songs and carols that entertained and delighted the assembled crowd.

## Q.I.... "ADVENT"

- Re-sets the calendars of Christian worship
- So it is the beginning of a new year of scripture readings and a new annual cycle of prayer and liturgy
- Calls for a new beginning
- We wait
- As we live in the "in-between" two comings: the first was when Christ came to Bethlehem giving us the opportunity to receive Him; the second will be when Christ comes again to take his "Bride" (the Church) at the end of time (we say or acclaim this in every communion service: "*Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!*")
- We wait with Joy and with Expectation!
- Four Sundays of the Advent season: 1. Stay awake and watch! 2. Prepare a way for the Lord! 3. Rejoice, the Lord is coming soon! 4. God-is-with-us!
- Advent, then, is dedicated to the last things: death and hope, judgement, heaven and hell, but above all, to Jesus' glorious coming.
- Colour is purple and there are no flowers in church: a solemn season (but wait for the gold and flowers of Christmas!)



### DECEMBER

- 1st Discoverers are going out for **lunch** - speak to Christine Tanner if you would like to join them
- 4th During the 10.15 Eucharist at The Old Church Paul Martin, our Reader in training, gives his **first sermon** (please pray with him)
- 18th Junior Church/'Big Fish' and their "**Nativity**" **production** during the 10.15 am Old Church service
- 24th 11.00 am **Carol-singing** at Penmakers' Court (All welcome)
- 24th 4.00 pm **Crib service**
- 24th 11.30pm **Midnight Mass** at The Old Church
- 25th **Christmas Day** 10.00 am at St Matthews',  
10.15 am The Old Church
- 29th 2.30 pm **Praying** in The Old Church  
7.00 pm **Evening service of Compline**

During December, the season of Advent, we at The Old Church are collecting **food**: non perishable items (tins, rice, pasta, tea, etc) for the work of the charities 'Brushstrokes' and 'Food Bank' who provide for those locally in need. Please support.

## A CHRISTMAS ALPHABET

- A** is for **Angels**, appearing so bright,  
Telling of Jesus that great blessed night.
- B** is for **Bethlehem**, crowded and old,  
Birthplace of Jesus by prophet foretold.
- C** is for **Cattle**, their manger His bed,  
There in the stable where He laid His head.
- D** is for **David** and his ancient throne  
Promised forever to Jesus alone.
- E** is for **East**, where shone the bright star  
Which Magi on camels followed afar.
- F** is for **Frankincense**, with myrrh and gold,  
Brought by the Wise Men as Matthew has told.
- G** is for **God**, who from heaven above  
Sent down to mankind the Son of His love.
- H** is for **Herod**, whose murderous scheme  
Was told to Joseph in a nocturnal dream.
- I** is for **Immanuel**, "God with us,"  
For Christ shows us the way to the Father's house.
- J** is for **Joseph** so noble and just,  
Obeying God's word with absolute trust.
- K** is for **King**. A true king He will be,  
Coming in power and authority.
- L** is for **Love** that God showed the earth  
That night in the stable in lowly birth.
- M** is for **Mary**, His mother so brave,  
Counting God faithful and mighty to save.
- N** is for **Night**, when the Saviour was born  
For nations of earth and people forlorn.
- O** is for **Omega**, meaning "the last;"  
God is eternal: present, future and past.
- P** is for **Prophets**, when living on earth  
Foretold His redemption and blessed birth.
- Q** is for **Quickly**, as shepherds who heard  
Hastened to act on that heavenly word.
- R** is for **Rejoice**. The sorrow of sin is  
Banished forever when Jesus comes in.
- S** is for **Saviour**. To be this He came;  
The angel of God assigned Him His name.
- T** is for **Tidings** related to all,  
Telling of Him who was born in a stall.
- U** is for **Us**, to whom Jesus was given  
To show us the way and by love be driven.
- V** is for **Virgin**, foretold by the sage,  
God's revelation on prophecy's page.
- W** is for **Wonderful**, His works and His words,  
The King of all Kings, the Lord of all Lords.
- X** is for **Christ**. It's X in the Greek,  
Anointed, Messiah, mighty, yet meek.
- Y** is for **Yes**, called God's Yes in His Word;  
God's answer to all is Jesus the Lord.
- Z** is for **Zeal** as it burned in Christ's heart.  
Lord, by thy Word to us zeal impart.

**Have a blessed day!**