

THE OLD CHURCH NEWS

OPEN TO ALL - OPEN TO GOD
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NOT THE VICAR'S VOICE!

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us ..." (Hebrews 12:1)



As many of you know, I have been working for six years towards a PhD in theology. In July I went to Manchester for the graduation ceremony. Luckily the sun shone, and we were able to take photographs of me in my robes! I would like to thank you all for the support and encouragement you have given me. There were certainly times when I needed perseverance. And one of the things which kept me going was the regular Sunday

by Sunday worship at The Old Church.

As I write we are in the final build-up towards the Olympics. St Paul remarks in 1 Corinthians 9:24, "in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize". There will be athletes who return from London 2012 clutching a medal, having achieved a lifetime's ambition. But let us spare a thought for those who will finish bitterly disappointed, years of training seemingly unfulfilled.

We all have times when we fail: when we run out of breath, trip up, lose our stride ... And that is when we need to be there for each other, and remind each other that as Christians our values are not all about success. St Paul tells us that he had a 'thorn in the flesh', something which harassed him, and kept him back.

He prayed fervently that it might be removed; but instead he received this message: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (1 Corinthians 12:9). I pray that in your times of weakness you may know the grace of God.

Ann Conway-Jones

BEN'S MATHS WEBSITE

Six months ago, with the help of my maths teacher and the school's ICT team, I created www.furtheryourmaths.co.uk. This maths revision website is run by students for other students. We started with revision for GCSE Further Maths, and have now branched out to GCSE Statistics and KS3 Maths. Over the last few weeks a new team of ten year 8 kids have learnt how to expand, manage and successfully run the website.

They will take over when I leave for college in September. This team will hopefully teach and inspire students for years to come. The website has been a huge success, with almost 1000 views from 29 countries in every continent except South America. It has also had encouragement and support from Lord Jim Knight and Alan November, a leading American expert in using ICT in education.

Ben Conway-Jones

LAST MONTH'S NEWS

In July four candidates from the Old Church congregation along with twenty-seven others from the Warley Deanery met at St Mark's Church to be confirmed by Bishop Andrew. Prior to the service three of the proposed candidates from the same family spoke of how they had rediscovered their faith following the death in February 2012 of Gordon, their beloved husband and father. The three began attending Sunday morning services at Old Church as well as social events and described the wonderful pastoral care they received from the Vicar and congregation. This led them to realise what was missing spiritually in their lives. As the newly confirmed were welcomed into the wider church family at St Mark's, the joy of the occasion was mirrored on their faces and our four candidates explained how they were touched by the support of Nigel, the church family and Bishop Andrew.

A most Marvellous, Majestic, Magnificent and Moving evening of music hall Extravaganza was enjoyed when the Tremendously Talented and Terrific Thrifties embarked on an Enchanting evening of Entertainment at the Barlow theatre in Langley. The Awed and Ahhed audience of "A Little of What you Fancy" were Tantalizingly Transported throughout the Music Hall era with a Sparkling and Splendicious array of stories and songs depicting the life and times of vaudeville, burlesque and stage.

A Fantastic night of Fanciful Fun!!

Severn Valley Railway was the destination for Discoverers as they all came on board for a day exploring the bygone era of steam. They began with a mid-morning cuppa in the tea rooms on Kidderminster Station before embarking on the journey to Bridgnorth. Lunch was enjoyed at the quaint and hospitable Shakespeare Inn. A short tour of the town followed and the day was rounded off by the relaxing train journey back to Kidderminster.



AUGUST

- 6th 6.30pm **Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord**—Holy Communion in the Vicarage (garden, weather permitting) followed by barbecue party
- 12th 10.15 am **Sister Phoebe preaches** at The Old Church
- 15th 8.00 pm **Eucharist** to celebrate the **Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (followed by drinks in the Vicarage)
- 24th Younger members of The Old Church to "Big Fish" attend the **Greenbelt**
- 27th **Festival**
- 25th **Wedding** (in St Matthews) of Tanya and Melvin, please pray for them and their guests
- 30th 2.30pm **Shared Prayers** in The Old Church (see Rosemary Guest for further details)
- 30th 7.00 pm **Compline**/Night prayer

GETTING TO KNOW YOU...

Have you ever talked to someone at church but have never got round to asking their name? Well I have! Two uniformed officers come regularly to Old Church, stay for coffee and are ready to talk to and help everyone. I have only ever asked them for advice. Last Sunday I tried putting a name to the uniform. Our two Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are Matt Ball and Julie Wright.

Matt, a family man, has three beautiful daughters and likes watching boxing and football. Julie looks too young to be expecting twin grandchildren. She enjoys gardening, growing her own fruit and vegetables and watching football.

Before joining up Matt was a scaffolder, but had family members in the police force. Julie was a data inputter; a chance meeting with a fellow PCSO set her on the road to community policing. How fortunate for us. After some months training Matt and Julie worked in Bearwood, then moved to Smethwick, and have been supporting us for four and five years respectively.

Two years ago Julie and Matt obtained £500 for Big Fish and have applied for new funding for this year. How lucky we are to have such wonderful PCSOs even if they are Aston Villa supporters.