

THE OLD CHURCH NEWS

O P E N T O A L L - O P E N T O G O D
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TOUCHING DOWN IN HEAVEN

I wonder if there are those who have been close to you and have died and whom you still talk to. For some of us it can be a comfort and support. I believe that life beyond death in the fullness of God is not static. In creating each of us God, I feel sure, wants us to grow into wholeness and holiness and wants that process to continue beyond our mortal life. So, we also need, perhaps, to let our departed loved ones become free, though we still hold them in our heart.

The Church's Saints are also, I suggest, changing and growing into God's likeness. In this month of July we encounter two of them: St. Thomas on Wednesday 3rd and St. Mary Magdalene on Monday 22nd. Thomas was the doubter who, understandably, couldn't believe that Jesus had been raised from death and had appeared to some of the disciples when he, Thomas, hadn't been able to be there and see with his own eyes. Maybe you might tell Thomas about some of your doubts as well as your longings. I feel he would listen with sensitivity and wisdom, gained from his personal experience. And in sharing some of your feelings I believe that God would respond and deepen your faith.

Then Mary Magdalene: she was so grieved at Jesus' death and so distressed to find his body was no longer in the tomb that

she could not recognise the one she loved so much when he appeared to her on Easter morning – until he called her by her name. Perhaps we all from time to time have feelings of loneliness and lostness, in spite of close family and friends. I imagine that Mary Magdalene would quickly understand if you were to tell her some of your troubles and worries. Jesus would be close by, I believe, wanting to fill you with his peace and stability.

This month we continue each Sunday to celebrate the Trinity: the three persons of God, Creator, Son and Holy Spirit, who are so close to each other that they are one God. Perhaps you might ponder on what's helped to make you the person you are, and to ponder on the parenting you received as child and adult. Perhaps if you have children or grandchildren who are close to you, you could reflect on how to respond to them in ways that will help them to grow and flourish and have fun. Jesus was a friend and helper to many in his ministry and can, if we ask him, show us how to become like him. And what of the Holy Spirit? Well, I trust that the Spirit is in each one of us, in heart and mind and body, as the Life-Giver, wanting us to be fully alive to God's gifts to us in the world, and to be thankful.

Sister Stella CSMV

PAST MONTH'S NEWS

The church family welcomed baby Zacharia George during his baptism in Sunday morning worship. Later that day Harry Edward was also brought by his parents and godparents to be baptised. Harry was welcomed by the Old Church family during the following Sunday morning service when he received his Baptism certificate.

Two weeks later the baptisms of baby Tillie-Mae Jayne and baby Lewis James were

celebrated at a 12.15pm service.

Old Church hosted a beautiful service of Taize prayers and songs when members of the Taize community led those attending in sung responses. The style of singing from Taize uses a phrase from the bible or a theological saying which is sung repetitively for a few minutes. This gives time for the words to move from the head down to the heart. These songs originate from a monastic community.

THE GOOD AFTERNOON CLUB

If you are over 55 years of age and free on Friday afternoons between 1.00 pm and 3.00pm then why not join the Good Afternoon Club? It is held at the Dorothy Parkes Centre on Church Road Smethwick. A weekly subscription of £2 entitles you to tea and biscuits every week, a ploughman's lunch or fish and chips every two months, a Christmas meal and a visit to the pantomime. There are quizzes, bingo, dancing and singing, outings to a variety of venues and good company. What more could you ask?

The club was founded by Elizabeth Windsor in 2004. She was approached by the late Anne Marie, who was manager of the Dorothy Parkes Centre at that time and asked to set up a club for mature fun loving ladies and gentlemen, offering entertainment and good company. Elizabeth has done this and more, ably supported by her committee, Francis Bagnall, John Wilcox, and Maureen Baker.

Several members of The Old Church belong to the club so why not ask at church or at the Dorothy Parkes Centre?

I nearly forgot to mention members will receive flowers and a card for their birthday. You can have fun, food, friendship and feel valued at the Good Afternoon Club.

So why not join me when you are next free on a Friday afternoon, for a good time?

THE OLD CHURCH WEBSITE

Have you looked at our super new website? www.smethwickoldchurch.org.uk is the web address.

You'll find a host of interesting and useful information including the history of the church, a diary of events, current as well as previous issues of the newsletter and links to sites that you might find helpful in your faith journey.

If you don't have your own internet connected computer then you could ask someone who does to show you or you'll be welcome to use a computer free of charge at any public library.



JULY

- 3rd **St. Thomas the Apostle**
- 14th 1 pm - 6 pm **Picnic in the Park**
Bring your friends and a picnic along to Warley Woods
- 17th 7.30 pm **P.C.C meeting** in the Dorothy Parkes Centre
- 18th Discoverers' **Outing to Sunnycroft**
- an Edwardian Villa in Shropshire
- 22nd **St. Mary Magdalene**
- 25th 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old church (see Rosemary Guest for further details)
- 25th 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church (see Wendy Fullerton for further details)
- 28th **Baptism** of baby Trianna. Pray for her, her parents and godparents.

A Prayer When Challenged

**God of wisdom and love,
help me and all others who
are struggling with difficult
circumstances find direction
and strength to face our
challenges. Give us assurance
that underneath us are your
everlasting arms, that will
sustain us through everything
we face day and night.
In Jesus' name.**

Amen.