

THE OLD CHURCH NEWS

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

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2 AUGUST 2013



CHAPLAINCY - COMING TO A PLACE NEAR YOU!

Firstly I suppose I should introduce myself. I live in Smethwick and I am the Chaplain at the University of Wolverhampton. I was previously a Chaplain in the Royal Air Force and I have also worked in the NHS.

Chaplaincy can trace its roots back to St Martin of Tours, a fourth Century monk and Bishop who cut his cloak in half to share with a beggar. It can also be traced to words of Jesus himself, from Chapter 25 of St Matthew's Gospel, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me.....I was sick and you took care of me, I was in Prison and you visited me." Chaplaincy today is found caring for individuals of all faiths or no faith in prisons, hospitals, schools, universities, agriculture, the armed forces, among seafarers, in industry, airports, the retail trade and even the night time economy.

It is not only the domain of clergy, like myself, representatives from all faiths and lay people are called to this role.

Why do we do it? Well the role is certainly different from Parish work, but no less important. We work among those who are often on the margins of Church life looking in, maybe interested in issues of faith or spirituality, or just needing the support that we

can offer. Some of the first sentences I often hear is 'I haven't got a faith but....' And then the problem spills out.

In our modern world many do not recognise the need for belonging to a Church, or even the need for faith, but they are longing for something, there is a Gap in their lives. Chaplains help people fill that Gap, and maybe open the door a little to God.

Life is hectic and stressful and so one of the biggest issues for modern society is the lack of space, of peace and quiet. The Bible speaks highly of the idea of Sabbath, and although we may have lost the traditional quiet of Sunday maybe as we approach summer and many are thinking about holidays, we should all take time to reflect and give ourselves space. It might be that you are too busy for a holiday, or indeed it is an expensive dream, but all of us can make space, for others, for ourselves and for God.

This summer consider taking a small amount of time to be by yourself with God, maybe in the sun if we have any, in the Garden, in the Park, or take time to relax with family, or even in Church, and please say a prayer for those called to work in another area of Church life as Chaplains. *Eddie Wynn*

PAST MONTH'S NEWS

The Discoverers' June monthly outing saw them visiting Halfpenny Green Vineyards located on a beautiful hillside in South Staffordshire. This adventurous day saw a number of the group exploring the paths of the Vineyard Trail where they looked at various types of grape. They were well rewarded at the end of a warm and sunny day with a complimentary glass of wine with their lunch. Time was later spent in the craft and gift shop

before it was time to return home. On the homeward journey the Discoverers enjoyed a wonderful opportunity to view a lovely scene where fields of rapeseed were ablaze with red poppies.

A beautiful and moving service of prayer for healing and wholeness followed Evening Prayer at the end of June. It was a delight to see increased numbers attending on that Sunday evening and taking part in the service.

THE WISE WOMAN'S STONE

A wise woman who was travelling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveller who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveller saw the precious stone in the wise woman's bag, admired it and asked the wise woman to give it to him. The wise woman did so without hesitation.

The traveller left rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the jewel was worth enough to give him security for the rest of his life.

But a few days later he came back, searching for the wise woman. When he found her, he returned the stone and said, "I have been thinking. I know how valuable this stone is, but I give it back to you in the hope that you can give me something much more precious. If you can, give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone."

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.

PAST MONTH'S NEWS contd.....

This year warm sunny weather heralded The Old Church's Summer Fete. It was held in the Dorothy Parkes Centre and the grand sum of £953 was raised. These monies are a welcome contribution towards the general running costs of The Old Church. A huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this a superb and successful day.



AUGUST

- 4th 5.00 pm **Thanksgiving** for Sister Anna CSMV. Everyone is welcome.
- 6th **Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord**
- 8th **Thrifties 60's Party** All ladies are welcome. (See Wendy for details)
- 10th 3.00 pm **Wedding** of Richard & Sarah – please pray for them and their guests
- 15th **Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**
- 25th **Baptism** of baby Joshua - please pray for him, his parents and godparents.
- 29th 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old Church (see Rosemary Guest for further details)
- 29th 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church (speak to Wendy Fullerton for further details)

WHERE IS GOD?

GOES BEFORE US:

Isaiah 45:2 "I will go before you and make the crooked places straight..."

BEHIND US:

Isaiah 52:12 "But you will not leave in haste or go in flight, for the LORD will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rearguard."

UNDERNEATH US:

Deut. 33:27 "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

WHEREVER YOU GO:

Joshua 1:9 "Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."