

# 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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## VICAR'S VOICE

It's June already – how the year passes! June is a beautiful month in which nature could not be more abundant. I know this because the vicarage garden is full of brightly coloured flowers and lush greenery, so much so that I have the gardener at the ready with mower and pruning tools to ensure that there will be space enough for the summer fete.

This month brings with it the longest spells of daylight and the shortest periods of darkness; it brings forth an array of wild and cultivated flowers; ladybirds, butterflies and bees go about their business; vibrant green foliage spreads and reaches; plump red strawberries are picked and eaten and fruit trees, of various kinds, carry the abundant promise of harvest time. It is the month in which all of nature seems to sing God's praises.

In the church, June is also the month that brings Easter to a close with the celebrations of Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi. Corpus Christi, the lesser known of these feast days, traditionally falls on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. The service is one of thanksgiving for the gift of Holy Communion and, over the years, it has been celebrated in a number of ways

including colourful processions through the streets and elaborate flower festivals that have incorporated a carpet of flowers along the aisle, or a scattering of flowers around the altar.

The month of June, then, offers us the opportunity to celebrate both the religious sacraments of bread and wine and the created sacraments evident all around us in the natural world. Tess Ward acknowledges, in her book 'The Celtic Wheel of the Year' that, 'For some there is an awareness of needing to be fed by God at community tables in bread and wine, in the company of others. For others a need to be outside (in the natural world)...for others still, the need for both'.

And it will be in the light of this, that we will be celebrating the special feast of Corpus Christi on June 19<sup>th</sup> with a service in the vicarage garden followed by a barbeque. So do come, if you can, to give thanks for the sacrament of Holy Communion and the sacrament of nature in all its June glory. We can't promise a carpet of flowers at the altar, but we can promise (if flaming June lives up to its name) a beautiful outdoor setting and some scrumptious food!

## PAST MONTH'S NEWS

The second Sunday in May saw the start of Christian Aid week. Any envelopes containing donations for Christian Aid should be returned to church as soon as possible.

David Ingram, whose days as the volunteer mini bus driver have come to an end, was thanked by the Discoverers for the many very pleasurable trips they have enjoyed with him at the wheel.

A Saturday afternoon Table Top sale raised over £140 for Church funds.

The end of May saw the removal of the scaffolding which has hidden the tower for some 3 months. Major repairs have been made to both the tower roof, which was leaking badly, and the stone and brickwork that was showing its age. We are very grateful to the Dorothy Parkes' Trustees for funding this expensive renovation work.

## SUMMER FETE

### Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at 2.00 pm

Weather permitting(!!) The Old Church Summer Fete this year will be held in the Vicarage garden. Once again, the choir from Uplands Manor Primary School will be coming to delight us with their singing. There will be stalls galore with bargains for all. Of course, this means we will need a lot of help setting up, manning stalls on the day and clearing up afterwards. Donations required include good quality items for Fancy Goods, Books, Plants, DVDs and Toys stalls, Bottles (full) for the Tombola and other items suitable as prizes for the Raffle and Treasure Island would be very welcome. The Summer Fete is one of Old Church's major fund raising events so please support this venture. Speak to Christine Tanner with offers of help.

## HOW TO DANCE IN THE RAIN: A MESSAGE OF ENDURING LOVE

It was a busy morning, about 8:30 am, when an elderly gentleman in his 80's, arrived at the clinic where I work as a nurse. He had to have stitches removed from his thumb. He said he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9:00 am.

I took his details and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him.

I saw him looking at his watch and decided, since I was not busy with another patient, I would evaluate his wound.

On examination, it was well healed, so I talked to one of the doctors, got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redress his wound.

While taking care of his wound, I asked him if he had another doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry. The gentleman told me no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife.

I asked about her health. He told me that she had been there for a while and that she was a victim of Alzheimer's Disease. As we talked, I asked if she would be upset if he was a bit late. He replied that she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him for five years now.

I was surprised, and asked him, 'And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?'

He smiled as he patted my hand and said, 'She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is.'

I had to hold back tears as he left, I had goose bumps on my arm, and thought, 'That is the kind of love I want in my life.'

True love is neither physical, nor romantic. True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the best of everything they have.

We all want to receive this kind of love, but somehow, I think, the better part is to be in a position to give this kind of love.



## JUNE

- 3rd 7.30 pm **Dorothy Parkes' Board Meeting** in the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 19th 6.30 pm **Corpus Christi service** in the Vicarage garden followed by barbeque
- 21st 4.00 pm **Marriage** of Mark & Kay
- 25th 7.30 pm **Lay Pastoral Ministry** meeting at the Vicarage
- 26th 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old Church (see Rosemary for details)
- 26th 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church (see Wendy for further details)
- 28th 2.00 pm **Summer Fete** in the Vicarage Garden (weather permitting)
- 29th 6.30 pm **Deanery Confirmation** at St James' Church, Rounds Green

## SMETHWICK CHURCH ACTION NETWORK (SMETHWICK CAN)

Over the past fifteen years many local parish churches have championed youth ministry under the umbrella of the Unity Project and in January 2012 fourteen churches came together to launch Smethwick Foodbank. In response to the need for a co-ordinated approach to tackle poverty in this area, these two groups have now come together to form Smethwick CAN.

This is an exciting new project that has four streams. There is a 'response stream' which aims to develop work around homelessness and provision for those in crisis; a 'support stream' to provide individual and group support around issues such as money management, debt support and welfare rights; a 'learning stream' to support children and young people and a 'works stream' which will look to increase aspiration and support people towards work, training and volunteering.

There are a number of ways you can get involved with this new venture. You can volunteer to work with one or more of the project streams; you can help to shape the project by being on a working group; you can be a church Rep; you can help to raise awareness about poverty; you can pray or you can give a regular or one-off donation to help to sustain the work of the project.

If you want more information please see Deb