

# 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

We are now well and truly in the season of summer, the season that signifies a pivotal time in the lives of many children and young people. We are reminded at this time each year, irrespective of academic attainment, of the potential and resilience that children and young people embody and what they have to offer to our communities and our churches.

But it is, sadly, easy to overlook the contribution they can, and do, make. Young people, more often than not, get a 'bad press'; the media draw our attention to negative stories and appear to overlook the positive.

One recent exception to this was the story about Stephen Sutton, the teenager who raised £3 million for charity, before his death from lung cancer. But there are, of course, many other positive stories that do not reach our hearing.

For example, we know the G8 leaders meet, but did you know (I didn't!) that there is Junior 8? This is an annual meeting of 14-17 year old representatives of the G8 member nations as well as Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa. They meet to discuss issues raised at the G8 and draw up their own proposals to be considered. This group has a real impact on the thinking around major world issues.

Many of us will be committed to fighting injustice through organizations such as Smethwick CAN

and Christian Aid. But did you know (I didn't!) that research shows that the rising concern for justice is seen most dramatically among the youth? Christians in high schools, colleges and universities are putting extraordinary emphasis on justice as part of their Christian witness.

During a speech in Belfast earlier this year, Michelle Obama demonstrated her faith in the young when she urged around 2,000 school children, university students to help create lasting peace.

*"You have the freedom of an open mind, you have a fresh perspective that will help you find solutions to age-old problems," she told a captivated audience at the Waterfront Hall convention centre. Huffington Post June 18<sup>th</sup> 2014*

The challenge, I guess, is for us to also demonstrate our faith in the young by recognising the range of gifts they have to offer along side their passion, energy and perspective. And to make it clear that they have the potential to contribute greatly to church life, its leadership and its decision making.

So, let us hold children and young people in our prayers at this pivotal time and let us rejoice that young and old, alike, can be part of bringing about the kind of church community we are seeking to be.

## PAST MONTH'S NEWS

Pentecost was celebrated with members of the congregation speaking simultaneously in their native tongues followed by sounds of rushing winds to echo the first Pentecost. The joyous service was concluded with the singing of "We shall go out with joy" accompanied by various musical instruments and the clapping of hands.

Old Church members joined with some from Holy Trinity and St Matthews to visit the Sisters of CSMV at their Convent in Wantage. The group were welcomed by the warm laughter of Sister

Mary-Jen and were shown around the accommodation and the beautiful chapel. Stunning statues and carvings created by past members of the order were gazed upon in awe.

Holy Communion was celebrated in the vicarage garden to commemorate the special feast of Corpus Christi. Friends from the congregations of Holy Trinity and St Matthew's joined members of Old Church in a beautiful outdoor setting and old and new friendships were enjoyed at the barbeque following the service.

## BUSY PEOPLE !

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when twenty - four hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar..... and the beer.

A Professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

So the Professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The Professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course the sand filled all other spaces. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "Yes."

The Professor then produced two cans of beer from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now" said the Professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life.

The golf balls are the important things - your family, your children, your health, your favourite passions - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.



## JULY

- 2nd The **Annual General Meeting** of the Trustees to the Smethwick Chapelry
- 6th 3.00 pm Service in Holy Trinity Church to celebrate the work of the **Sisters in Smethwick** followed by refreshments.
- 10th 4.00 pm **Ministry Team Meeting** at the Vicarage
- 20th 12.15 pm **Baptism** of Jack
- 23rd 7.30 pm **PCC meeting** at the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 25th 4.00 pm **Marriage** of Garreth & Karen
- 31st 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old Church (see Rosemary for details)
- 31st 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church (see Wendy for further details)



**Traidcraft Thank you**

We have received a letter from the Chief Executive of Traidcraft thanking traders and supporters for their support throughout the year. Here are some extracts condensed from it: -

**"Our innovative work on West African palm oil has begun to take off..... In East Africa, India & Bangladesh our projects have continued to make an impact on the lives of many hundreds of thousands of men and women.**

**Thank you to all who have supported our work. . . . As we enter our 35<sup>th</sup> year we are still pioneering, campaigning, working to make trade fair for the poor.**

**We are a team spread far and wide made up of everyone reading this letter....Your support has enabled us to touch the lives of hundreds of thousands of farmers and artisans across the world."**

**In a world where millions of children will go to bed hungry tonight, I need not remind you how vitally important it is that we continue to fight poverty through trade".**

*Rosemary Guest - The Old Church Traidcraft Trader*