

THE OLD CHURCH NEWS

OPEN TO ALL - OPEN TO GOD
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VICAR'S VOICE

As we move into September the landscape changes. The leaves begin to turn from green to gold, deep red and fiery orange and the fruit on trees, and in the hedgerows, opens providing the immediate outward sign that we are moving from the summer into the autumn. Autumn is a much beloved season and Keats' poem entitled To Autumn, which begins 'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' manages to encapsulate something of the beauty and richness of the this time of year.

It is in this season that churches mark 'Creation Time', the period between September 1st (Creation Day) and October 4th (the feast date of St Francis of Assisi).

Creation Time provides the opportunity, through its services and its liturgy, to celebrate the fruits of God's good earth. The main festival during this time is of course the Harvest Festival, which will be on September 14th at Old Church this year. During this service we will, as is traditionally the case, give thanks for creation and, at the same time, think about our roles as stewards of the created world. Thankfully, this year we shall be able to sing, with heartfelt thanks, the words,

Come ye thankful people come
raise the song of Harvest-home:
all is safely gathered in,

ere the winter storms begin;
God our maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied'

But, as we know, there will be many other communities across the world who will not be well placed to sing these words. This year, in their 'Abundant Life' campaign Traidcraft draws our attention to the 40% of people in Bangladesh who live in abject poverty, about which they write: 'Despite seeing a significant reduction in poverty levels over recent years, climate change, the economic crisis and volatile food and fuel prices have reversed the trend, pushing an estimated four million people back into poverty.'

Traidcraft's Sustainable Livelihoods for Poor Producers (SLIPP) project is a five-year programme aimed at reducing poverty among poor communities in Bangladesh by increasing income and employment opportunities. The SLIPP project, they say, 'is training more than 250 local organisations and individuals to provide vital services and support to 2400 small producer businesses.'

One simple way we can support the work of Traidcraft's SLIPP project is by buying fairly traded goods from the monthly Traidcraft stall held in the Dorothy Parkes Centre after the Sunday morning service.

PAST MONTH'S NEWS

The centenary of the outbreak of World War 1 was commemorated with a service beginning at 11:00 am at Holy Trinity church. This was followed by half muffled ringing and prayers at Old Church. A scroll of fabric was used for the community to record their personal prayers thoughts and memories. The scroll was welcomed at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara for further prayers and messages. It was then returned to Holy Trinity in a Solemn Procession of Prayer for a reflective and

moving service and the day concluded with a Prayer Vigil in the company of Westminster Abbey. Smethwick Heritage also displayed an exhibition of World War 1 in Trinity Motors where people were invited to visit and record prayers of remembrance.

Thursday 14th August saw Holy Communion shared at Old Church in a peaceful and contemplative service with hymns and poetry to celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

IF JESUS CAME.....

Would you have to change your clothes
before you let Him in?

Or hide some magazines and put the Bible
where they'd been?

Would you hide your worldly music and put
some hymn books out?

Could you let Jesus walk right in or would
you rush about?

And I wonder... if the Saviour spent a day or
two with you

Would you go right on doing the things you
always do?

Would you go right on saying the things you
always say?

Would life for you continue as it does from
day to day?

Would you take Jesus with you
everywhere you go?

Or would you maybe change your plans
for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your
closest friends?

Or would you hope they stay away until His
visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever
on and on?

Or would you sigh with great relief when He
at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things
that you would do

If Jesus came in person to spend some time
with you.

Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!

**And see if there be any grievous way in me
and lead me in the way everlasting!**

Psalm 139: 23-24



SEPTEMBER

- 9th 7.00 pm **Dorothy Parkes' Board Meeting** at the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 11th 5.00 pm **Ministry Team** meeting at the Vicarage
- 13th 10.30 am **Messy Church** for adults and children at Holy Trinity church
- 13th 6.30 pm Bring & Share **Harvest Supper** at the Dorothy Parkes' Centre
- 14th 10.15 am **Harvest Festival**
5.00 pm Service of **Readings & Hymns for the Holy Cross Day**
- 17th 7.00 pm A **Conversation about Discipleship** at the DPC
- 18th **Discoverers' Trip** to Winterbourne Garden
10.00 am Meet at Dorothy Parkes' Centre
contact Judy Eynon for further details
- 19th 12.00 noon **Marriage** of Jason and Caroline
- 20th 12.00 noon **Marriage** of Neil and Rachael
- 20th 1.30 pm A **Conversation about Discipleship** at the DPC
- 21st 12.15 pm the **Baptism** of Remi
- 24th 7.30 pm **PCC Meeting** at the DPC
- 25th 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old Church
(see Rosemary for details)
- 25th 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church
(see Wendy for further details)

A BIG CONVERSATION

In September there will be an opportunity to meet together to talk about what kinds of things we might want to have at Old Church to help us explore and develop our faith. This will be an expansive conversation in which ideas can be shared and collected, with the view to developing a programme of different events, from traditional Bible studies to creative activities around prayer and spirituality.

Please come along to the Dorothy Parkes' Centre on either Wednesday September 17th from 7.00 pm - 9.30 pm or Saturday September 20th from 1.30 pm - 4.00 pm.

Refreshments will be provided.