

# 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

June is going to be a busy month in the life of Old Church, to say the least! From June 4<sup>th</sup> through to the 11<sup>th</sup> we are holding the 'Old Church Festival Week', which should be a great time of celebration and enjoyment. But soon after all the festival events and activities have taken place, and the flower displays and art work have been taken away, many of us will be dusting ourselves down and throwing ourselves into the final stages of planning for the 'Old Church Summer Extravaganza', which is to take place on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Both of these are big events and will inevitably involve a lot of hard work, and commitment, by the many people who are volunteering to help. Much of this work is obviously associated with the long to-do lists of practical tasks that need to be undertaken. In terms of the festival this means preparing the space for the flower displays, art work and the various events that will happen during the week, designing and making flower arrangements, setting out tables for the cream teas, preparing and serving refreshments and meeting and greeting those who visit. In terms of the Summer Extravaganza, this will involve preparing the space in the DPC and vicarage garden, carrying and laying out

tables and chairs, setting up stalls, sorting out money, transporting games and looking after the stalls when the event is underway.

But it's much more than these to-do lists of physical tasks that draws on the energy of those involved. The aim of both of these events is to celebrate the community of which the church is an integral part, and to celebrate with the community in this small, but precious, corner of God's world. Engaging with the community, in this way, also requires a lot of energy and commitment, as we network with community organisations, make connections with talented local artists, musicians and poets who will be taking part and building relationships with the people who are helping us to publicise the event through shops, cafés, libraries and many other places.

Hopefully, June will prove to be a rich, vibrant and exciting month in the life of our church, albeit an extremely busy one; hopefully it will surprise us and bless us in ways we cannot yet imagine and hopefully it will, in all the excitement and busyness, provide a place of warmth, welcome and refreshment to all of us who are directly involved and to all those who attend.

## LAST MONTH'S NEWS

A special evening service on the second Sunday explored the theme 'Pictures of God'. Some members of Old Church joined the congregation at Holy Trinity where Ascension Day was celebrated with a service of Holy Communion.

The Discoverers enjoyed good weather for their outing to Stratford-upon-Avon which for some included a boat trip on the river.

Along with other churches, Old Church had a collection for this year's Christian Aid Week appeal that aims to provide help for families

affected by flooding in Bangladesh.

The Archdeacon's Visitation was held at St Anne's church in Moseley where Matthew Turley and Rosie Eynon took the oath of office as churchwardens

Our first Sunday afternoon church "Walk and Talk" took place in Waseley Country Park where we find the source of Birmingham's "major" river - the River Rea. Following tea and cake at the end of the walk, some of the walkers managed to arrive back at Old Church in time for Evening Prayer.

## THE PILGRIM COURSE

As I write this, there is just the final meeting of the *Pilgrim Course* to come; as you read this, the second of our *Pilgrim Courses* will have ended. The subject this year was *The Eucharist*, that great Christian mystery of bread and wine, body and blood, by which we try to understand our relationship with God and particularly our being a part of the Church which we regularly describe as the Body of Christ.

In truth, the Eucharist is not our Eucharist nor the Church's Eucharist. It is God's Eucharist – God's feast, God's gift to the world. It is a moment when we hope to experience God's everlasting love towards us and all creation. We pray that on occasions that the service of Eucharist does, in the words of Rowan Williams, give us a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven.

There will be another *Pilgrim* course coming next year; we should have completed it by 2022!

*Paul Martin*

## TRINITY SUNDAY

Trinity Sunday is one of nine special days in the Christian Year and, of all the Christian celebrations, poses the most difficulty. Every time we recite the creed, we state our belief in 'One God', yet go on to talk as if God should be understood as three distinct beings, three independent centres of thought and action. Perhaps our imagery does not help, with God represented as the 'old man with a beard', Jesus the somewhat younger man, and the Holy Spirit often ignored but sometimes glimpsed in the form of a dove.

In truth, it is better not to struggle with such somewhat strange language but to accept, as the Church itself does, that the Trinity is an absolute mystery which we will not understand even when we are told about it. However, it does not stop us holding that reassuring picture of the one essential God existing as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in a relationship held together by love, and forming a triangle which encompasses the whole of God's creation.

*Paul Martin*

The Old Church website can be found at [www.smethwickoldchurch.org.uk](http://www.smethwickoldchurch.org.uk)



## JUNE

- 4th - 11th **Old Church Festival Week** (see flyers at the back of church for details)
- 12th 5.00 pm **'Songs of Praise'**, a service to end our Festival Week
- 16th **Discoverers' Trip on Birmingham Canal** (see Christine Tanner for details)
- 18th 11.00 am **The Marriage** of Dafydd and Gemma at Old Church
- 21st 7.30 pm **Deanery Synod** (venue tba)
- 22nd 6.00 pm - 8.00 pm **Soul Space**
- 23rd 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in Old Church (see Rosemary for details)
- 28th 7.30 pm **Lay Pastoral Ministry Team** meeting at the Vicarage
- 30th 2.00 pm **Ministry Team Meeting** at the Vicarage



## Summer Extravaganza

On: July 2nd 2016

At: The Dorothy Parkes' Centre  
& The Vicarage Garden

From: 12 noon - 4.00 pm

craft stalls - victorian tea room -  
plant stall - face painting - photo  
booth - live music - a bouncy castle  
- birds of prey - food stalls -  
coconut shy, - stocks - pluck-a-  
duck - padlock tombola - lollipop  
game - and lots, lots more.

Entrance 30p