

St Mary the Virgin  
EWELL PARISH CHURCH  
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WEEKLY NOTES

30 November 2003

COME,  
LORD JESUS

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

*A new Christian Year begins.*

be two 'Fold-Ins' in the Parish Room: one after the Eucharist on Tuesday, and the other during the course of Wednesday morning. People can, of course, take some to fold at home (they are available in the office today), but we need to have them back by Wednesday so that they can be put into street-bundles. If the leaflets are all ready next Sunday, then some at least can be taken on that day. It would be more sensible if the leaflets were not actually distributed until, say, mid-December, but at least they would be out of the church, and we would know sooner than usual which streets still remained uncovered, and not have a frantic scramble on the Sunday before Christmas. I am very grateful to all those who have helped with this job over the years, and hope that there will be others who can also join in this year. W.R.H.

**And Christmas posters too.** Again, we could do with lots of these all around the parish, and it doesn't matter all that much if they sneak out of it either. Enough of this happens the other way round; one local church even had the nerve to write to me this year, asking me to publicize their arrangements for Easter morning. Our Christmas posters are in an eye-catching colour, and I seem to remember that last year several A3 size posters were taken, but both A3 and A4 sizes will be available. The posters are not dated, and will last as long as the present pattern of Christmas services continues.

**Next Sunday.** Morning arrangements as usual. There is Evensong and Holy Baptism at 1630, and, as is usually requested for such occasions, it would be good to have a reasonably-sized welcoming group at the service from the worshipping congregation here. The lovely photographs in the Welcome Area of recent christenings (taken by Marion Rao) ought to emphasize that all this is something to do with us, for we are the local manifestation of the wider body of Christ, into which these newly-baptized Christians have been incorporated through their baptism; and their entry into it was made through our doors at St Mary's. I am very glad that some members of the congregation regularly come to these occasions, but they really could do with some company.

In the lives of those who believe and pray, there are bleak winters of the spirit. We seem to go along well for a while in prayer and relationships and life generally, but from time to time we disintegrate. It is very painful. You may suspect that this will prove to be a creative disintegration, that God is recreating you, putting you together in the likeness of his Son at a new and deeper level. Certainly this does happen: growth is not easy; there is a probably distressing period for the caterpillar on the way to butterflyhood. We are all participants in this experience from time to time, and a chrysalis needs sympathetic understanding, so we should be gentle and patient with ourselves, as with others. Nevertheless, they are hard to live through, these winters of the spirit. When you know yourself to be sterile, helpless, unable to deal creatively with your situation or change your own heart, you know your need for a Saviour, and you know what Advent is.

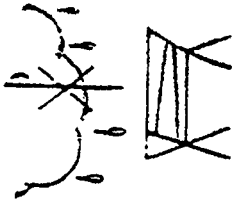
*The Coming of God,  
Maria Boulding*

*Sharing the love of Christ, the Light of the world, with the people of Ewell.*

Whether we like it or not, the fact remains that for those who come only occasionally to church it is generally Christmas which is *the* major Christian festival, not Easter. In fact, I recently heard that belief expressed from a somewhat unlikely source, and had to explain that Jesus 'came' at Christmas in order to accomplish what would be completed over Good Friday and Easter. The simple proof of this is seen in the very different nature of the congregations at the two festivals. However, we are meant to meet people where they are, not necessarily where we would like them to be, and this is why we make considerable efforts here to have quite a varied programme of services over Christmas, and to give it all some considerable publicity. That is why, further on in the Notes, there is information about our Christmas leaflets and posters. However, the regular worshipping congregation will be well aware that the four-week season of Advent is not a run-up to Christmas in the sense that the shopping and party season is, but rather a time for sober and devotional concentration on the implications of the coming of Christ. The Advent Procession last night brought out some of these points, and there are some left-over copies of the text of the Procession which may be of use to some people.

Today also marks the start of a new Christian Year, and the simple all-age service 'Light up for Jesus' at 1100 will serve as an introduction to the year as a whole. It is based on a service we have had in the past, called *The Service of the Five Candles*. I am very grateful for all the work that Kathie Burgess and her collaborators put into these imaginative acts of worship. (The next one will be 'The Arrival at Bethlehem Service' on Christmas Eve.) The combination of Saturday night and Sunday morning this weekend has set the scene not just for reflection on the Coming of Christ and the countdown to Christmas, but also for the systematic unfolding of the mysteries of the Christian faith through the pattern of the liturgical year. It is a day for Christian New Year's Resolutions, and in our worship today there should be ample material to enable us to think on such things.

**In our prayers today** we pray for this church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion for the Church in Sri Lanka. In the diocese we pray for the work of the Church among Deaf People, and for their Chaplain, the Reverend Bob Whittle (at Walton on the Hill). In the parish we pray for our altar servers (and for some more), and for the people who live in Bradford Drive.



0800 HOLY COMMUNION

Order 1: page 167.  
Eucharistic Prayer F: page 184 (omit the responses in red brackets).  
(Eucharistic Prayer F is particularly suitable for Advent)

Common Worship rite

Collect of the Day: page 376

0930 SUNG EUCHARIST

Common Worship rite

Wayfarers, 'Children's Hour' and Crèche.  
Order 1: page 167.  
Eucharistic Prayer A: page 184; other Advent material: page 300  
Setting of the Eucharist: *Batten*, Short Service

Introit hymn: 425 (*Thomas à Kempis introduces the Christian Year: 'The Son's Course.'*)  
Introduction, Prayers of Penitence, *Kyrie eleison*  
[*Gloria in excelsis* omitted in Advent.]  
Collect of the Day: page 376

Readings on separate paper.

(EVERYTHING FROM THIS POINT ON READINGS PAPER UNTIL AFTER THE GOSPEL)

Old Testament Reading from the Book of the prophet Jeremiah

*Remain seated for Gradual Psalm 85, sung by the choir.*

New Testament Reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians

Hymn: Songs of praise the angels sang.  
[Tune: St Theodore]

The Holy Gospel Reading from St John.

Sermon by *the Reverend Dr Patrick Miller*

Nicene Creed (sung today): traditional language text on page 213. (*Shaw* melody)

Intercession, followed by the Greeting of Peace

Hymn 5 (Collection)

*All sit* for the Offertory Anthem: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland. *J S Bach*

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,  
Der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,  
Dess sich wundert alle Welt,  
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

*Come, the nations' Saviour-Child,  
To be born of Mary mild;  
Earth beholds this wondrous sight,  
God's own gift in earth's dark night.*

Then *all stand* for Eucharistic Prayer A: page 188 (omit responses in red brackets).  
Proper Preface: page 300. Turn back to page 178 for Lord's Prayer, etc.  
During the Communion: *Agnus Dei*, *Batten*  
and Hymn 18

Post-Communion hymn: 9

Post Communion Prayer: page 376; Advent Blessing and Dismissal

*Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known, and join us for coffee in the church hall across the road between the 0930 and 1100 services. Music at Coffee from Sarah-Jane Dale and Luisa-Maria Overt.*

Sarah-Jane Dale, with harpist Luisa-Maria Overt, will be playing in the hall and in church today in a sponsored Record Attempt of 100 venues in seven days. It is in aid of the Children's Trust at Tadworth, specialising in the care, rehabilitation, treatment and education of children with profound and multiple disabilities, acquired brain injuries and life-limiting injuries. Have a word with Sarah-Jane in church today, but otherwise contact Lizzie Cook on 01737 365019, if you would like to sponsor Sarah Jane and her colleague.

1100 CHRISTIAN FAMILY PRAISE: 'LIGHT UP FOR ADVENT.'

*There is a separate leaflet for this service. Music before and after the service from Sarah-Jane Dale and Luisa-Maria Overt.*

1200 HOLY COMMUNION

Details as at 0800.

Common Worship rite

1830 Evening Worship at Ewell United Reformed Church

In church this week

Tuesday 1000 Holy Communion  
Christmas leaflet Fold-In afterwards; see below.

Other events and notices

Sunday 1830 Vicar 'sits in choir' at the Cathedral Advent Procession.  
Monday 2030 'Pro Musica' meeting in the office.  
Tuesday 1930 Vicar at Cathedral Dinner. (Canon's Perk No.1!)  
Wednesday 1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the Church Hall.  
Another Christmas leaflet Fold-In during the morning (in church)

Ewell Parish News for December is available today.

The Christmas Market raised the very creditable sum of £1464 for our four designated charities. Many thanks to all who helped in so many ways, especially to Ruth and Frank Stockwell who co-ordinated the enterprise. There was, as always, a delightful atmosphere about the church and hall, even though the miserable weather tried its best to dampen things. In the event it was a good and very satisfying day.

The Christmas Services leaflet. We would like to get ahead with this a bit earlier this year, because it does involve quite a bit of work. Although Churches Together in Ewell publish the Christmas services in the various churches (in recent years in a local paper), the coverage is not exactly ideal, and for many years we have made sure ourselves that every household in this parish receives information from us about the Christmas services, together with other general information about St Mary's. Whilst our machinery in the office will produce the leaflets, it cannot fold them or count them into bundles; still less, of course, can it distribute them. So this week there will