

St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
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WEEKLY NOTES

29 July 2007

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

There are some interesting readings at Mattins today, which those attending other services might care to look up. The First Lesson is a short extract from the Song of Songs, a book which is a series of love poems, in which lover and beloved are now united, now divided, now sought, now found. Its language is passionate, and there is no mention of God in the book. (Nor for that matter is God mentioned in the Book of Esther.) For centuries Jewish and Christian exegetes understood it in an allegorical way, seeing it as describing the relationship between God and Israel or between Christ and his Church. St Bernard preached eighty-six sermons on it between 1135 and his death in 1153, and even then he had only covered the first two chapters. Later mystics like St John of the Cross have related the text of the book to the union of the individual soul with God. Nowadays, scholars see the book for what it is, and view it as a collection of hymns to true love, sanctified by union. That in itself is a noble theme. However, underlying it all is the simple truth that love is God's great gift, and the book itself is a reminder of the nature and dignity of love, and that human love is a wonderful gift from God to be used honourably, tenderly and unselfishly.

The Second Lesson is from one of the more obscure books of the New Testament, 2 Peter. Today's passage, 3: 8-end, contains warnings about doubtful speculations about 'the End', but contains not a few itself. It also contains a famous passage, which has -- in a slightly perverse way -- comforted those who find St Paul's writings not a little difficult to follow. Clearly they were causing difficulty to some even in New Testament times. These two passages from books not read all that frequently aloud in church on Sundays can serve as a reminder that there are many areas of scripture which are not covered by the Sunday readings, and that this is particularly the case for the Eucharistic congregations.

Our prayers today. We pray for our own church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion for the Church in Uganda. We pray in the Diocese of Guildford for the Mothers Union in all its parish branches. In the parish we pray for the local Division of the Territorial Army. School, and we continue to pray that someone will be found to serve as our second churchwarden, and someone else to take charge of our Michaelmas Market for external causes. In our regular prayer for the people of the parish we pray for those living in Parr Avenue.

*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 after the Sung Eucharist.*

The Garden Party. The Social Committee, under the chairmanship of Rosemarie Henson, is organizing this event. It is to be held on 8 September, St Mary's Day, from 1430 to 1630 at 46 Ewell Downs Road. Pimms and fruit punch will be served on arrival, followed by a delicious cream tea. As with all our social occasions there will, of course, be suitable entertainment for a relaxing afternoon. Transport to the venue will be available, if required. Tickets at only £3.50 each will be available from David Dance or from the office. Further information may be had from Rosemarie Henson on 020 8224 2713.

A note from the Vicar: Dr David Dance officially finishes as churchwarden on Tuesday, and I say once again how immensely grateful I am for all that he has done during his time of office, and for all the help we have received from Jenny. From Wednesday we shall be running at one-churchwarden power, which (quite apart from important wider questions) has implications for 'back of church' issues, since Mr David Crick is normally very busy at the other end of the church in connexion with the choir. We are considering how to deal with this. Also from Wednesday I shall be on leave, and perhaps the juxtaposition of those two points is of some significance.

For the last time today we shall have a formal additional Post-Communion prayer, in which we specifically lay before God our two problems: the lack of a second churchwarden and the need for someone to run the Michaelmas Market. I repeat some words I wrote some weeks ago, and say that in the case of the second churchwarden, the parish -- and more specifically in this instance the worshipping congregation -- really has to *own* this problem, because at the end of the day the problem is not really mine. Although I express my 'consent' at an election, the churchwardens are clearly the elected representatives of 'the people', and that means of the people of the parish and not just of the congregation, so we have wider responsibilities in all this. I hope that members of the congregation will actively discuss among themselves how this matter can best be resolved. Quite apart from the excessive workload which will otherwise fall entirely on Mr David Crick, and he is full-time employment, there are clear implications for the future. If a parish is nearing an interregnum and can only find one churchwarden, then it would not be surprising if those in higher authority questioned the viability of the parish as an independent entity. I shall in any case be formally writing to the Bishop on my return from America to indicate when I shall be leaving Ewell. Some very hard thinking is needed.

In the case of the Michaelmas Market, it is reasonable to suppose that if no-one has surfaced by today the event will not take place, and we shall have to find alternative ways of raising at least a comparable figure for external causes. This is one of those occasions when the *Toronto Statement* of the 1960s can come back to haunt us: 'The church that lives for itself will die by itself.' A brief meeting of the External Affairs Committee is scheduled to take place after the Sung Eucharist today, at which decisions will have to be made.

W.R.H.

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 **HOLY COMMUNION** *Common Worship rite*
 Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 412. Proper 12.
 Eucharistic Prayer G: page 201.

0930 **SUNG EUCHARIST** *Common Worship rite*

'Children's Hour' now on holiday; Crèche available in church.
 Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 412. Proper 12.
 Eucharistic Prayer B: page 188.
 Setting of the Eucharist: *Stanford* in B flat.

Introit hymn: 415 [First tune, in C]
 Black book: page 167. The Invocation, the Greeting, Prayers of Penitence
 with *Kyrie* confession today: page 133 ('Spirit' section).
 Gloria in excelsis: traditional language text on page 211.
 Collect of the Day: page 412.

(*Readings on separate paper.*)
 New Testament Reading from St Paul's Letter to the Colossians.
 Gradual hymn: 406 [anticipating the Gospel reading].
 A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.
 Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Nicene Creed (sung today): traditional language text on page 213.
 Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.
 Offertory hymn 484; Collection.
 Eucharistic Prayer B: page 188; the Lord's Prayer, etc. back on page 178.
 At the invitation to Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).
 During the Communion: Hymn 307.

Anthem: *Litany to the Holy Spirit. Hurford*
 In the hour of my distress,
 When temptations me oppress,
 And when I my sins confess:
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.
 When I lie within my bed
 Sick in heart and sick in head,
 And with doubts discomfited:
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the house doth sigh and weep,
 And the world is drowned with sleep,
 Yet mine eyes the watch do keep:
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

Then *all stand* after the anthem for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 413.
 Second Post-Communion prayer for our urgent parish needs: page
 The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal.
 Hymn: 495
 Organ: Prelude and Fugue on the name 'Alain'. *Durufle*

1050 **Brief meeting of the External Affairs Committee in the Sacristy.**

1100

CHORAL MATTINS

Sermon by *the Vicar*
 Responses: page 8
 Venite (shorter version)
 Office-Hymn: 452
 Psalm 46. 'A safe stronghold our God is still.' Page 193.
Readings on separate paper.

First Lesson from the Song of Songs.
 Te Deum (chants setting): page 10.
 Second Lesson from the Second Letter of Peter.
 Hymn 472 [First tune].

The Creed and the Greeting; then all kneel for the Lord's Prayer,
 the Responses and the three Collects (the first Collect on page 75).
 Anthem: *Non nobis, Domine.*

Quilter

THE CONGREGATION IS INVITED TO STAND AND JOIN IN THE LAST VERSE

Non nobis, Domine;
 'Not unto us, O Lord,'
 The praise and glory be
 Of any deed or word;
 For in thy judgement lies
 To crown or bring to nought
 All knowledge and device
 That man hath reached or wrought.
 And we confess our blame,
 How all too high we hold
 That noise which men call fame,
 That dross which men call gold;
 For these we undergo
 Our hot and godless days,
 But in our souls we know:
 'Not unto us the praise.'

All:
 O Power by whom we live,
 Creator, Judge and Friend,
 Upholdingly forgive,
 Nor leave us at the end;
Non nobis, non nobis,
Non nobis, Domine.

[Words by Rudyard Kipling, for
The Pageant of Parliament, 1934.]

The Blessing

[END OF CHOR TERM]

Prayers. Hymn 427; Collection.

Organ:

1200 **HOLY COMMUNION**

Order 1: page 167.
 Eucharistic Prayer A: page 184

Common Worship rite
 Collect of the Day: page 412.

1800 **Evening Prayer**

In church this week.

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**

Other events and notices.

Wednesday 1030-1200 **Coffee Morning** in the church hall. Tea-drinkers should
 not feel excluded: the leaf is provided as well as the bean.