

St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
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WEEKLY NOTES

2 December 2007

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Carol of the Advent, which we usually sing on the Sunday before Christmas, begins with the words 'People, look east.' In Advent we look in spirit 'eastward' to Bethlehem, but we do so in company with those of every age of history, as – whether looking forward or backward in time – we pray the Advent prayer, 'Come, O Lord.' The full nature of that coming is yet to be revealed, for there is more to it than just the Bethlehem experience. Advent is a many-faceted season, and I have written about this in this month's *Ewell Parish News*. As Advent begins, we 'look from afar' in joyful hope at that Coming of Christ, which has already brought the true light to this world's darkness, and which will continue to do so throughout human time. The Sung Eucharist today will illustrate this liturgically, with the singing by the choir of the translated text of a medieval Advent Responsory for Mattins (with music by Palestrina) from the west end of the church: 'looking from afar', from the 'furthest west' of the church, before illustrating the Advent hope by moving forward and eastward during the first hymn. The movements during the first part of the Advent Procession this afternoon also make this same devotional point.

There are several distinctive features to most of the services today. The afternoon service will really be 'something special', and I hope it will be supported by many members of the congregation, as well as by the families of the pupils at Emanuel School. There are a few copies of the service available in the Welcome Area. There will be some very fine music at the service. Advent is always a time to try something new; it is true for this Sunday, and it is also true for next Sunday. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray for our own church and parish, and in the world-wide Anglican Communion for the Church in the Province of Queensland (with its centre at Brisbane) in Australia. We pray in the Diocese of Guildford for those in training for the ordained or lay ministry, especially for our own Iain McKillop. In the parish we pray for our Servers of the Sanctuary and for the people who live in Seymour Mews.

<p><i>Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known to us, and join us for coffee in the church hall across the road after the Sung Eucharist.</i></p>
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SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 HOLY COMMUNION

Book of Common Prayer rite

The Prayer Book rite, which we have about quarterly at 0800, can now be followed (with about 98% accuracy) in Order 2 of '*Common Worship*,' beginning on page **229**. Unlike the monthly Prayer Book Sung Eucharist in the Mattins slot, the BCP rite at 0800 follows the 1662 order without *any* deviations from the actual text, except for the omission of the long exhortations. In order to achieve this, the simple rule is to *disregard any indented material* in the text. We shall, however, follow the Advent custom of omitting the *Gloria* just before the blessing. The Collect and Readings are, as usual, on a separate paper.

0930 SUNG EUCHARIST

Common Worship rite

<p>Wayfarers and 'Children's Hour'; Crèche available on request. Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 376 Eucharistic Prayer F: page 198. Other Advent material: page 300.</p>
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Setting of the Eucharist: *Palestrina*, Missa Aeterna Christi munera.

Organ music before the Eucharist: Advent Chorale Prelude: 'Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland' (*Come, thou Redeemer of the earth*) [BWV 599; Orgelbüchlein]. *J S Bach*

All stand when the organ music finishes.

Introit (sung from the west end of the church):

Advent Responsory: *Aspiciens a longe*.

Music: *Palestrina*

I look from afar, and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel? High and low, rich and poor, one with another. Go ye out to meet him and say: Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep. Tell us, art thou he that should come? Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. I look from afar, and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

[This is part of a Responsory from the First Nocturn of the pre-Vatican 2 text of Mattins for this Sunday in the Roman rite. The music is an adaptation of a setting of *Magnificat* by Palestrina.]

Hymn at the entrance: 5

[In F major]

Black book: page 167. The Invocation, the Mutual Salutation, the Prayers of Penitence, and *Kyrie eleison*.

(Gloria in excelsis is omitted during Advent; it returns at Christmas Midnight Mass.)

Collect of the Day: page 376.

(Use the Readings paper today from this point until after the Holy Gospel.)

Old Testament Reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah.

Gradual Cantic: Metrical version of the Isaiah reading. [Tune: *Glasgow*]

New Testament Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Sermon by *Mrs Wendy Varney*, Reader

Nicene Creed: page 173.

Intercession; then all stand for the Greeting of Peace.

Offertory hymn 494; Collection.

Eucharistic Prayer F: page 198; Proper Preface: page 300.

The Lord's Prayer, etc. back on page 178.

[There is a note below about this section of the service; if it has not been read before the start of the service, please read it afterwards (not now).]

At the invitation to Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God); first section.

During the Communion: *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God); second section.

Hymn during Communion (*remain seated or kneeling*): 17

Then *all stand* after the hymn for the Post-Communion Prayer: page 376

The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal. Hymn 7.

Organ: Overture to 'St Paul'. *Mendelssohn*

1100 CHORAL MATTINS

Book of Common Prayer rite.

Sermon by *the Vicar*

Organ: Advent Chorale Prelude: 'Lob sei dem allmächtigen Gott'

[*Creator of the stars of night*] (BWV 602; Orgelbüchlein).

J S Bach

Responses: page 8

Music: *Byrd*

Venite (shorter version)

Office-Hymn: 1 (First tune).

Note: This plainsong melody has just been used in the organ music before the service.

Psalm 96. *The Lord is the Judge of the world.*

Page 251.

First Lesson: Isaiah 52: 7-10

Blue book: page 422

The promise of the Lord's deliverance.

Te Deum: page 10. *Ireland in F*
Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Blue book: page 423
The Advent call to watchfulness.

Hymn 3 [Second tune]

The Creed (page 12) and the Greeting; then all kneel for the Lord's Prayer, the Responses and the three Collects (the first Collect on page 51).

Anthem: Zion hears her watchmen's voices. *J S Bach*

[Words are similar, but not identical, to Hymn 16, verses 2 and 3.]

Prayers. Hymn 466; Collection. The Blessing

Organ: Prelude and Fugue in D major (BWV 542). *J S Bach*

1600 Evening Prayer (in the Sacristy)

1645 Organ Music and dimming of lights before the Advent Procession begins. Details of the organ music are on the service paper.

1700 A PROCESSION WITH MUSIC AND READINGS FOR ADVENT.

The service is sung by the Chapel Choir of Emanuel School, Clapham, together with members of the Parish Choir, and under the direction of Jonathan Holmes. *There is a special leaflet for this service.*

In church this week

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**
1930 for 2000 **Evening Fellowship** in the Parish Room, led by members of the Mothers Union.

Other events and notices.

Monday 1930 Candle evening at A & E Longhurst.
2000 Meeting of the Finance Committee

Wednesday 1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the church hall. Tea-drinkers should not feel excluded: the leaf is provided as well as the bean. A pleasant and relaxing time with familiar and friendly company. It is an open occasion; anyone can come.
2000 Standing Committee of the Parochial Church Council.

Thursday 1930 Bishop Christopher conducts an Advent Evening of Art and Music at Christ Church, Esher. There is a general invitation.

Saturday 1830 for 1900: **'A Christmas Cracker'**: Dinner and entertainment in the Church Hall. Tickets all sold out now.

The Weekly Notes are somewhat larger than usual today, but there is quite a lot on, and some points for next Sunday morning's arrangements are taking up quite a bit of space. There is something distinctive on every Sunday between now and mid-January. It is a busy time in church, and I am very grateful for all the work put in during the run-up to Christmas by so many people. W.R.H.

Year A begins today, and a new three-year cycle of readings begins. In Year A the principal gospel text used is that of St Matthew, though on certain occasions (as also in Years B and C) St John is the preferred source. We began printing out the Sunday readings on separate papers when it became plain that the print in the published books was ridiculously small, and the books themselves absurdly heavy. At that stage the only text conveniently available on disk was that of the Jerusalem Bible, so there will be a slightly different 'feel' to the readings this year. It is, in any case, a good translation. However, we are eclectic in our use of the various versions, and from time to time a different version will be used. The excessively politically correct text of the NRSV (in the red lectionaries) irritated many members of the congregation, and it is seldom (if ever) used here now. By and large, we use the *Revised English Bible*, the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV as opposed to N[ew]RSV), the *Jerusalem Bible*, and occasionally some other versions. The *Authorized Version* (the King James version) is normally only used at the monthly 11 o'clock Book of Common Prayer Sung Eucharist, when the AV text is what the Prayer Book actually provides. All these versions are now available electronically, but Year A will continue to have a predominantly *Jerusalem Bible* flavour, since that was the only text available at the

time the readings papers were first produced, To revisit all the readings for every Sunday in Year A would indeed be a weariness of the flesh, bearing in mind that the job of providing Sunday papers took three years to complete. Even now there are a few gaps for days when there have been calendrical quirks in the past.

Official Notices are in position today giving notice of a meeting of parishioners for the purpose of *electing a churchwarden*, and this is to take place on Sunday, 16 December at 1100. This will not greatly affect the Sunday timetable, and the only casualty will be the sermon at the start of the 1100 service. However, there will be a seasonal reading in the 'proper' sermon slot instead.

Gift Day result. Everyone will be glad to know that the Gift Day raised £1418 for our four designated charities. There may be a little more to come. For a completely new venture, we must declare it a success. It was a pleasant and very happy occasion, and this may now be the new way ahead for our major annual fund-raising for outside charities. The actual amount raised is in fact comparable with what has hitherto been raised through the Christmas or Michaelmas Markets, but certainly this has been achieved with infinitely less effort. There will, of course, be two children's charities supported through the cash collections at the Christmas services. When all this is joined to the money raised by the Annual Lenten Project, and what comes from Children's Society boxes, it is clear that St Mary's produces a considerable amount of money for external causes in the course of a normal year. Although it does not come exclusively from St Mary's folk, it is worth pointing out that this year the collection for the Poppy Appeal at Mattins on Remembrance Sunday was £792.

The display boards for the four **Gift Day Charities** are still available for inspection in the Welcome Area. They give details of *The Brooke* (saving suffering animals), *John Grooms* (working with disabled people), the *YMCA* (helping young people particularly in times of need), and *Lifeboats* (The Royal National Lifeboat Institution). They will be removed tomorrow, so last chance for a closer look today. There is also some material in the Welcome Area from the *Bible Society* and from *The Bible Reading Fellowship* as part of the run-up to next Sunday's observance of 'Bible Sunday'.

During Advent some of the **Advent Chorale Preludes** of *J S Bach* will be played before most of the choral services. Bach wrote some very lovely Chorale Preludes for this season. Details of these will be printed on the Notes, as today, but in any case they can be found on the full service lists available on the table in the Welcome Area, just by the west door.

Margaret Howard is in Epsom General Hospital after a stroke last Wednesday. She is doing reasonably well. There is a get well card in the Welcome Area for members of the congregation to sign. Anyone feel like ringing the bell at the 0800 service for the immediate future? And that is only one of the very many things which Margaret has been doing. W.R.H.

The Vicar. For the benefit of those not in church during the past fortnight, the Vicar plans to leave St Mary's after next November, when he reaches retirement age. In other words he will not be going before then, even though he could have gone at any stage during the past four years. Although his birthday is in November, the actual date of departure will probably be a few weeks later, as agreed by the Bishop and by the Parochial Church Council. More about this in due course.

Christmas Leaflets. I am grateful to all who folded and bundled these during the past week. They are now available on tables in the Welcome Area for distribution through the parish. Please do not look glum at the prospect; it may be a chore (I cannot think of anyone who has ever told me that he or she enjoys doing it), but a moment's reflection will reveal quite how important a task this really is. There is no other occasion in the year when we have a complete circulation of the parish, and Christmas is the most obvious time to do it, when there is a general measure of goodwill towards the Church. As well as giving details of our Christmas services, the leaflet also contains much general information about what goes on at St Mary's. *Please help in this, if it is at all possible*, and not necessarily just in one's own street. A fair number of St Mary's folk live outside the parish, and we would much appreciate their help in this job. Also, two or three working together might be the best way of tackling some of our longer streets like the Epsom Road, Meadow Walk, or the Kingston Road (as far as just beyond the Highfields estate); most years it is one of these three streets which is left uncovered, and this is a pity. Advent this year lasts little more than three weeks, so it would be good if most of the leaflets went today, so that we can see how matters stand as the month moves on. W.R.H.

There are also **Christmas Posters** available, some A3 and some A4, and it would be good if most of these also got taken today. Would anyone like to offer some of them to the shops, offices, pubs and restaurants in the Village? In fact, anyone with a 'prime site' – a corner house or a large and conspicuous window – is particularly asked to help us in this way. Also, I am not too fussed if some of this gets put up beyond the boundaries of the parish, since we often find stuff from other churches displayed around here. I think I have mentioned before that one church (not Anglican) even had the nerve to ask me to publicize their own Easter services for them; I am quite sure they wouldn't have done so if it had been the other way round. We have a good mixture of different styles of worship over Christmas at St Mary's, and the more publicity we get the better. We always have good congregations over Christmas, but much of this is due to our special seasonal publicity. W.R.H.

The Christmas Card box. This is once again in position. It is a facility we offer for internal Christmas mail, and has been much appreciated for quite a number of years, since it saves postage. However, every year we find cards in the box which are intended for people who are known to be housebound, and who cannot possibly collect their cards from church. ***We do not do a delivery service,*** so these cards are wasted. Also, it may be worth checking on who is likely to be away over Christmas. The tables with the cards will be cleared after the services on 30 December.

The Advent Wreath. I have given in over this, and re-instated the Advent Wreath this year, after having said that the mess caused by the dripping wax outweighed the benefit of the 'visual aid.' We'll try again, and take added precautions. The old wreath is being used, but perhaps the time has come to have a more worthy object; a donation of £50 towards one has already been promised. Other donations would be welcome, and we shall see what can be done for next year. W.R.H.

And while on the subject of **Candles:** the *pricket stand* (candle rack) continues to be well-used. Normally it is in front of the Side Chapel, with the focal point being the Taizé cross behind the altar, although (of course) this is also where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. The coin-box has recently been emptied, and has been found to contain about £250 – an unexpected surprise.

A reminder that there are still a few **Service Lists** available in the Welcome Area, which give details of all the Sunday services, including the choral music and organ voluntaries over Advent and Christmas.

There **WILL** be an **Alone at Christmas Lunch** this year, after a gap of a year. It will be organized by *Churches Together in Ewell* and a full Christmas dinner will be offered to all those who would otherwise be on their own. It will take place on Christmas Day at Stoneleigh Baptist Church between 1230 and 1600, and transport can be arranged. There is no charge, but donations can be made, if wished. Please contact 020 8337 8744 (daytime) or 020 8393 3011; or alternatively make contact by e-mail: christmas.dinner@dst.pipex.com as soon as possible.

Next Sunday. There are two distinctive features next Sunday, and members of the congregation may well reflect upon whether they wish to change, for once, their normal worshipping arrangements on this day. We are keeping 'Bible Sunday' at 0930, with our local rite of the ***Procession of the Scriptures***, which is essentially a teaching occasion, reminding us of what the Bible is, also of what it is not. Then at 1100 there will be one of our series of ***Christian Family Praise*** services, and on this occasion it will take the form of a **Teaching Mass**. We have not had one of these for a long while, and never (as far as I can recall) at 1100. Whilst the service will be quite simple in style, it is not intended to be an exercise in low-brow liturgy, and any members of our congregations who would appreciate a simple 'refresher' on the nature and structure of the Eucharist would be very welcome to join us at 1100 on that day. Dr Miller will be the celebrant, and I shall give the commentary and continuity as the service unfolds. Both these services have something distinctive and different to offer, and opportunities of this sort are not all that frequent, so please think about which option may be appropriate. W.R.H.

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