

St Mary the Virgin  
EWELL PARISH CHURCH  
(020 8393 2643)  
[www.stmarysewell.com](http://www.stmarysewell.com)

## WEEKLY NOTES

9 December 2007

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

*'Bible Sunday' this year.*

Baptist and Bible. Repentance and Renewal. Preaching and the Sacred Page. It all goes together, but *in that order*. The Baptist's preaching – set out in the gospel reading at the Eucharist today – was, and is, a call to repentance. For new adult Christians that is still an actual requirement. Baptism is not actually available, if there is no repentance. (The theology is only slightly different in the case of infant baptism.) Similarly, the right use of the Holy Scriptures leads to renewal in faith, and an awareness of the special nature of those writings, which long ago the Church decided were in such a class of their own that they would be considered as the ultimate standard for establishing Christian teaching and Christian conduct. But the Baptist came before the Bible (at least as far as the New Testament is concerned), and he preached and proclaimed without writing a book. The renewal came when people were convicted in their hearts by what he said to them. Similarly Jesus came and preached, and wrote nothing that we know of (except for some words in the sand, and presumably they all blew away), but again the renewal came when people were convicted in their hearts by what he said to them. The early Church did the same; the only 'scriptures' they had were the Old Testament, but the apostles preached, and once again the renewal came when people were convicted in their hearts by what they said to them. 'In the beginning was the sermon.' When later on the New Testament scriptures were established, there was stability for preaching and teaching alike, but whether in preaching or in the sacred page, it is the same Lord Christ who is proclaimed. Our preachers and pastors have to use their own words, but they are meant to be firmly built upon the preaching foundation of the apostles and prophets, and firmly rooted in the Holy Scriptures which have enshrined the primitive apostolic preaching.

That is why 'Bible Sunday' is important. Our local rite, 'The Procession of the Scriptures' (not on this year – see below), is one way of systematically bringing the Scriptures before our eyes on a yearly basis. There are plenty of other ways of doing so. There is a display from the Bible Society at the back of the church, which tells of lands where there is 'a famine in the land, not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, of hearing the words of the Lord' (Amos 8:11)), and of course there is all the material from the Bible Reading Fellowship. Today is a good day, for those who have not done so, to enrol with the BRF. John and Sarah Stovell will be in evidence in the Welcome Area, ready to welcome any new subscribers.

**Our prayers today.** We pray for our own church and parish, and in the worldwide Church for the Australian provinces of New South Wales (Sydney) and Western Australia (Perth). We pray in the Diocese of Guildford for the retired clergy who exercise a supporting ministry within the Church. In the parish we pray for the members of the Bible Reading Fellowship, and for the deepening of our own knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. In our regular prayer for the people living within the parish boundaries we pray today for those living in Shaw Close.

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**0700 MATTINS** Psalm 86

**0800 HOLY COMMUNION** *Common Worship rite*  
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 377; Post-Communion: 376.  
Eucharistic Prayer E: page 196. Other Advent material: page 300.

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

Children's Hour at 1100 service today; Crèche available on request. Order 1: page 167. <span style="float: right;">Collect of the Day: page 377.</span>
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Eucharistic Prayer F: page 198. Other Advent material: page 300.  
Setting of the Eucharist: *White* in E flat (for upper voices).

Unfortunately many of our singers are indisposed this weekend, and this has meant that the music today has been much simplified. Also, the Procession of the Scriptures at 0930 has been cancelled this year, and so has Choral Evensong this evening. Instead there will be a straight 'Bible sermon' at the Sung Eucharist, and the rest of the service will take its normal form. Evening Prayer will be at 1700.

Organ music before the Eucharist: Advent Chorale and Chorale Prelude: 'Gottes Sohn ist kommen' [*Lord, thy Word abideth*] (BWV 600; Orgelbüchlein). *J S Bach*

Introit hymn: 12

Then black book, page 167. The Invocation, the Greeting, first prayer and *Kyrie eleison*.

The Collect of the Day: page 377. *Readings on separate paper.*

Old Testament Reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah.

At the Gradual: Hymn 407. (*Not the psalm on the readings paper.*)

[The very familiar tune to this well-loved 'Bible Sunday' hymn is a simplified form of the melody used in Bach's music played just before the service.]

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

Canticle: 'From Jesse's royal tree' (*on readings paper*) [Tune: NEH 157]  
(Metrical version of part of today's Old Testament Lesson.)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

[*Readings paper not needed after this point; different hymns this year.*]

Sermon by *the Vicar*.

Nicene Creed: page 173; the Intercession and the Greeting of Peace.

Offertory hymn: 9. Collection.

Eucharistic Prayer F: page 198 [Omit responses in red brackets].

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

Hymn at the Invitation: 6

During the Communion: Agnus Dei (Lamb of God).

[There will be organ music during the administration of Holy Communion today.]

*After the organ music all stand for the Post-Communion Prayer: Page 376.\**

The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal.

Hymn 465

Organ: Prelude and Fugue in E minor ('*The Wedge*'; BWV 548). *J S Bach*

*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.*

## **1100 ALL-AGE SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY PRAISE.**

***THIS WILL TAKE THE FORM OF A 'TEACHING MASS' TODAY.***

*There is a separate leaflet for this service. It will take place at the Nave Altar.*

We have not had a Teaching Mass for a very 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 some sort of low-brow liturgy, and any members of our other congregations who would appreciate a simple 'refresher' on the nature and structure of the Holy Eucharist would be very welcome to join us at 1100 after coffee. Dr Miller will be the celebrant, and I shall give the commentary and continuity as the service unfolds. W.R.H.

## **1700 Evening Prayer in the Parish Room.**

As noted above, **Choral Evensong** has been cancelled tonight, but it seems sensible to keep the service at the advertised time, in case people turn up expecting the choral service.

**In church this week**

Tuesday	1000	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	1100	<b>The Funeral of Dorothy Marrs</b>
	1400	<b>Ewell Castle School: Nursery Christmas service.</b>
Friday	1400	<b>Ewell Castle School: Chessington Lodge service.</b>

**Other events and notices.**

Wednesday 1030-1300

***The Coffee Morning Christmas Party in the Church Hall.***

You are invited to our Christmas Party, and to enjoy a glass of sherry with a mince pie, to sing some favourite carols and to join in the Grand Raffle and Auction. Hope to see you there!

**The Post-Communion Prayer in Advent.** We shall be availing ourselves of the provision in *Common Worship* for using the Collect of Advent 1 as the regular Post-Communion prayer throughout the season. It is a fine prayer, newly composed by Thomas Cranmer for the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, and it successfully holds together several aspects of the Advent message. In days gone by it was always repeated after the Collect of the Day at all services throughout Advent. That practice has (perhaps sensibly) gone now, but this other provision is a good one, not least because some of the alternatives provided are either a bit on the wordy side or else a trifle anaemic. There is something very sturdy and positive about the Advent 1 prayer.

**The Advent Procession** last Sunday evening was a lovely occasion, and Jonathan Holmes' Chapel Choir from Emanuel School gave us some truly wonderful musical moments in the course of the service. It was good to welcome the School Chaplain, who also took part in the service with the Vicar and Mr Saunders.

**Official Notices** are in position again 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.

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.

Two (slightly amended) notices from last week:

**Christmas Leaflets.** I am grateful to all who folded and bundled these. They are available on the tables in the Welcome Area for distribution through the parish. Quite a number of bundles were taken away last week, but the tables still look fairly full. This may indeed be a Christmas chore (I cannot think of anyone who has ever told me that he or she really enjoys doing it), but a moment's reflection will reveal quite how important this task 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 past 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 on display around here. We have a good mixture of styles of worship over Christmas at St Mary's; 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.

A reminder for those who haven't picked this point up: **The Village Fair** next year will be on **19 July**. Please make a note of the date now.

I am grateful to **Peter Silversides** who has offered to ring the consecration bell at the 0800 Eucharist, now that Margaret Howard is out of action for the immediate future.

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. 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 by e-mail on: [christmas.dinner@dst.pipex.com](mailto:christmas.dinner@dst.pipex.com) – as soon as possible. This notice appears for the last time today.

**Lesson-readers at 0800 and 0930.** The lists will be devised this week, and available next Sunday. Anyone who would like to join the band of readers should let the Vicar know *today*, preferably on a scrap of paper so that it doesn't get forgotten about.

**Next Sunday.** It is 'Gaudete' Sunday, when the liturgical colour is the unusual shade of rose (except at 1100, when it is blue). At 1100 there is the Book of Common Prayer Sung Eucharist, when we use the Old English sequence of colours. Actually it will start about 1110, because of the meeting at 1100 to elect a new churchwarden. Evensong with Holy Baptism is at 1630.

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