

St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
(020 8393 2643)
www.stmarysewell.com

WEEKLY NOTES

23 December 2007

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

On the Sunday before Christmas our final liturgical act of preparation directs our minds to the Mother of the Lord. Our Lady's preparation was the natural one of a human pregnancy, and it was fortified by the fullness of grace, which was hers from the time she accepted her role as the Chosen Vessel. She no doubt understood but little of the divine mystery in which she played a central part, but she did what was required of her, and did it gladly and willingly. Her Joseph was at hand, and they both made the best of a situation when her time was come. All generations have since called her blessed, and this church like countless others is dedicated in her honour. In this deanery alone there are four other 'Mary churches' in addition to our own. It is the same in my own country, where the signposts (especially in rural areas) constantly direct one 'from Llanfair to Llanfair.'* The piety of our forefathers saw in the lowly maiden something truly wonderful and beautifully simple at the same time, and it is not surprising that there are Mary churches everywhere. As we contemplate the mystery of the incarnation once more, let us also glance at that essential simplicity which surrounds it all, and which shows that God chooses the simple things of this world to confound the wise. One might say that God put his faith in something which he knew to be still surviving of our original righteousness: for to reveal the depths of love divine, all loves excelling, he used something as simple as a mother and her love. W.R.H.

* 'Fair' is a mutated form of 'Mair', the Welsh for Mary.

We welcome to St Mary's today **the Archdeacon of Dorking, the Venerable Julian Henderson**. He is here to admit to office Jonathan Gocher, who was elected as our new Churchwarden last Sunday. This is the Archdeacon's first official visit to the parish. He will, of course, be much involved later on in matters to do with the appointment of a new Vicar here. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray for our own church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion for the Church in the Province of Brazil. We pray in the Diocese of Guildford for the work of the Diocesan Child Protection Officer, Janet Hind, and for the members of her team. Within the parish we pray for all who will be visiting St Mary's for our Christmas services. In our regular prayer for the people living within the parish boundaries we pray today for those living in Southmead.

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 HOLY COMMUNION *Common Worship rite*
Order 1. Traditional language today: page 207. Collect of the Day: page 451.
Post-Communion Prayer: 449.
Eucharistic Prayer A: page 216. Other Advent material: page 300.

0930 SUNG EUCHARIST *Common Worship rite*

'Children's Hour' in the church hall; Crèche available on request.
Order 1: page **167**. Collect of the Day: page **378**.
Eucharistic Prayer **F**: page **198**. Other Advent material: page **300**.
Setting of the Eucharist: *Victoria*, Missa O Magnum Mysterium.

The hymns are nearly all from *A Hundred Hymns for Ewell*. The hymn *Veni Emanuel* is divided in two because of its length, and is used after the first two readings. Please remain seated for this.

Organ music before the Eucharist: Variations sur un Noël. *Dupré*

Introit hymn: HHE 22 [t. AMR 191 i]
Then black book, page 167. The Invocation, the Greeting, the Prayers of Penitence and *Kyrie eleison*.

The Collect of the Day: page 37.

Use the readings paper from this point until after the Gospel. Please remain seated from the beginning of the Old Testament reading until the Gospel Procession has arrived in position; at that point please stand.

Old Testament Reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah.

Advent antiphon: O come, O wisdom from above. HHE 23, verses 1-4.

[Tune: NEH 11]

New Testament reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Advent antiphon: O come, O eastern morning light. HHE 23, verses 5-8.

[Tune: NEH 11]

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

The Gospel is read by the Archdeacon of Dorking.

Sermon by **the Reverend Dr Patrick Miller**.

The Nicene Creed is omitted today; the Intercession follows the sermon.

The Intercession is led by Vicky Gocher.

The Admission of Jonathan Gocher as Churchwarden by the Archdeacon of Dorking, the Venerable Julian Henderson.

The Greeting of Peace.

Offertory hymn: Come, thou Redeemer (*on readings paper*); Collection.

[Tune: NEH 19 ii]

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

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

Hymn at the Invitation: HHE 86

[Tune: AMR 57 i]

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

Anthem: Dixit Maria.

Hassler

Dixit Maria ad angelum: 'Ecce ancilla Domini; fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.'

English version: Mary said to the angel, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.'

After the anthem *all stand* for the Post-Communion Prayer: Page 376.

The Mutual Salutation, the Blessing and Dismissal.

Advent Carol: People, look east. (*On readings paper*)

'Seasonal Organ Voluntary': Sleigh Ride. *Leroy Anderson (arr. Trotter)*

Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known, and join us for coffee in church today between the 0930 and 1100 services. Our domestic arrangements are somewhat unusual today; it is not always like this!

1100 CHORAL MATTINS. NOTE: THIS WILL BE A VERY SHORT SERVICE.

Responses: page 8.

Music: *Byrd*

Venite (shorter form).

Psalm 146. *The Lord who loves, delivers and cares.* Page 309

First Lesson: Zephaniah 3: 14-20.

The promise to the daughters of Zion of 'fortune restored.'

Benedictus: page 11.

Second Lesson: Romans 16: 25-27.

Praise to God, whose eternal purpose is disclosed in Christ.

Hymn: AMR 58

The Lord's Prayer, the Advent Collect (page 51), and The Grace.

Organ: Variations sur un vieux Noël. *Cocherau*

o/c GENERAL DECORATION OF THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS.

'People, look east' and 'Sleigh Ride' really ought to drop more than a hint that we would like as many helpers as possible for this enacted parable of welcome for the

Christ-child, as we prepare the church for Christmas. It is a natural and homely piece of incarnational theology. There is a basic informality to what we do; it is in no way regimented, and it is meant to be a happy and a pleasant time. Whilst there are specific things to be done, there is also the chance for people just to go out into the churchyard and cut holly and other greenery, or generally take part in putting up lights, tinsel and the like all around the church. There are also sacristy jobs of one sort or another, like changing the altar linen, filling cruets and folding service-papers. No-one need feel that there is no job to do. Coffee is available, and there will be mince pies at some point, probably about the time of the **Angelus** at 1200.

Note: This Sunday and on 30 December Evening Prayer will not be said in church. It resumes on 6 January.

In church this week

THE CHRISTMAS SERVICES.

1600 THE ARRIVAL AT BETHLEHEM SERVICE

(24th) *This is an all-age service of Christian Family praise, and the service includes THE BLESSING OF THE CRIB. There is a special leaflet for this service.* Please note that this has become a very well-attended service in the last few years (about 350 or so), and early arrival is advised.

o/c Evening Prayer will be formally recited in the Choir.

The church will be re-opened at 2230.

2315 *The Parish Choir will sing carols from the Gallery before Midnight Mass.*

2345 PROCESSION AND MIDNIGHT MASS OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.

Setting of the Eucharist: *Jenkinson*, Mass for Midnight (see below).
Anthems: I sing the birth. *Moore*. In the bleak mid-winter. *Darke*.
Preacher: *The Vicar*. *There is a special leaflet for this service.*

0800 HOLY COMMUNION (Mass of the Dawn). High Altar.

Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 381.
Eucharistic Prayer B: page 188. Other Christmas material: Page 302.

1000 SUNG EUCHARIST AT THE CRIB (Mass of the Day). Nave Altar.

Setting of the Eucharist: *Darke* in E (Collegium Regale). *Lourdes* Gloria.
Preacher: *The Vicar*. *There is a special leaflet for this service.*

1200 HOLY COMMUNION. Book of Common Prayer rite. Nave Altar.

Green book: page 31; Collect: page 53. Readings on separate paper.

The 12 o'clock Eucharist on Christmas Day has in the past been primarily laid on for the (perfectly proper) benefit of one particular family, and the *Common Worship* rite has been used, as it is at the regular monthly 1200 service. The family will not be able to attend this year, and so it seems appropriate to use the opportunity to offer this slot to those who prefer the older service in *The Book of Common Prayer*. We have done this once or twice before, and it has not had any results of significance, but the opportunity is there this year for those who would value it.

Music at Midnight Mass. Most years we have a Viennese setting of the Mass at this service: Mozart, Haydn or Schubert. This year we are having a change. Some years ago, when Richard Jenkinson was Director of Music here he wrote a (Latin) setting of the Mass based on English carol melodies. This was in the tradition of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's well-known *Messe de Minuit*, in which the composer used familiar French carol melodies. We shall be doing this setting once again this year. It is a delightful setting, and the *Gloria* has a congregational refrain, which everyone will know. The two anthems at the service will be *Philip Moore's*, 'I sing the birth', and *Harold Darke's* lovely

setting of 'In the bleak mid-winter.' (Philip Moore was Organist and Master of the Choristers at Guildford Cathedral, when the Vicar was Canon-Precentor there, and both left on the same day: Philip Moore to York Minster and the Vicar to Ewell.) At the **Eucharist at the Crib** on Christmas morning we shall be reviving the *Lourdes Gloria*, which we have not had for several years, and which used to be very popular with the congregation. The choir juniors will be singing at the **Arrival at Bethlehem Service** on Christmas Eve, but that will not be a 'choral service' in the sense that the others are. It will be a much less formal occasion, though it will include the Blessing of the Crib.

Joan Boulden writes: 'We have raised the grand sum of £1025 for the children at the *Jeel al Amal Home* for Boys in Bethany. This money has been raised through our Wednesday coffee mornings in various ways, including donations, sales, raffles, etc. £1025 will mean a great deal to the home as it is often difficult to make ends meet. The money was sent off on 17 December *via* the bank, so it will be a nice Christmas present. Thank you all for your support.'

Sunday Eucharistic readings. These are now available on the window-sill in the Parish Room, and they go on until Palm Sunday. Those who did not collect their rotas last week should do so as soon as possible. Actually, those *not* collected now have an overprint about the difficult passages from Romans later in the year. This note also appears on the large version of the rota in the Welcome Area.

Internal Christmas Mail. All cards should be collected today or at the latest on Christmas Day. Unclaimed cards will be removed after next Sunday.

The Christmas leaflets have been going around the parish, and I am really most grateful to all who have taken part in this. At the time the Notes were being compiled there were still about twenty streets left, including (I fear) the London Road. It is still not too late for the remainder to be taken; indeed, a last-minute reminder might even do the trick in some cases.

Next Sunday. 'Basic Liturgy.' The Sunday after Christmas is always a gentle affair in church, but it has a clear atmosphere of its own. The services are very simple in style. The choir has the Sunday off, and all the singing is congregational. Our musicians have worked very hard in the run-up to Christmas – not everyone realises the amount of time they put in – and they can do with a break. The Vicar will be Canon Pooh-Bah next Sunday (Gilbert and Sullivan *aficionados* will understand *The Mikado* allusion): celebrant, preacher, leading the intercessions, and playing the organ, and no doubt filling in other gaps. Twice a year this happens – Low Sunday is the other occasion – but not for all that much longer.

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