

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

Christmas cards in aid of
The Children's Society
will again be on sale today
in the Welcome Area
after the Sung Eucharist.

WEEKLY NOTES

26 October 2008

LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

'Bible Sunday.'

This is the sort of Sunday for mentioning occasional points, which cannot find room for a mention on most other Sundays, because there always seems to be something more pressing. So two points today: one to do with the readings, and the other to do with an aspect of a regular feature of our Sunday worship: 'Our prayers today'.

The Readings. On 'Bible Sunday' it is appropriate for me to say how very grateful I am to all those who take part in the important work of reading the lesson in church, whether at the Eucharist or at Mattins. I imagine I say this on behalf of the whole congregation. In the Roman Catholic Church the 'Lector' is considered a 'minister' who has an important liturgical ministry to perform. In the Church of England it is not quite so formalised, and indeed the word 'Reader' is a technical term denoting someone who has been commissioned and licensed to preach. By and large we are talking about people who are glad to help out by being put on a readers' rota. Yet the simple reading of a scriptural passage in church is a great responsibility: it is the formal proclamation of the Holy Scriptures to God's people, assembled in church, and done through the medium of human speech. The Gospel at the Eucharist has more or less throughout Christian history (as far as I can tell) been deemed so important that uniquely we stand for it, rather than sit. Normally it is proclaimed by someone in Holy Orders, though the practicalities of parish life mean that either the priest does it himself, or else someone in authorized ministry (a Reader or Ordinand) does so. It is the climax of the first part of the Eucharist, 'the Ministry of the Word', in the same way as the Gospel Canticle at Mattins and Evensong (*Benedictus* or *Magnificat*) is the climax of the Divine Office – and we stand for them because each one is 'gospel scripture', not because each is 'a sort of hymn.' As a congregation we owe a lot to those who stand at the lectern and read. In most cases the readings have been looked at carefully beforehand; indeed I know of some instances where this preparation takes much time – not so much in the interests of good oratory, but in order to establish how best to convey the sense. Only once, I think, have I ever had to remove someone from the regular list of readers because of the person's constant slovenly and ill-prepared reading (and it was many years ago). Those who are on the current list deserve our thanks, and anyone who would like to join the band should mention it either to myself or to one of the churchwardens.

'This church and parish.' The section of the Notes about 'our prayers today' almost always begins with these words. This is not just some routine turn of phrase, which somehow just turns up each Sunday. It is an important and serious point that is being made. The traditional devotional custom is for the formal intention at the Sunday Eucharist in a parish church to be specifically applied to the local Christian community as such, that community which is assembled in the parish church, and which – very importantly – represents all the rest of God's people dwelling in the particular parish. In theological terms, the Christian congregation is the local manifestation of the whole body of Christ. It is also part of the traditional discipline for priests to apply their own personal intention on Sundays to that same end, and they offer the Holy Eucharist *pro grege*, 'for the flock' committed to their charge. However, 'the flock of Christ' includes 'other sheep who are not of this fold', and that is why it is not just 'church', but 'church *and parish*.' It is a reminder to priests and people alike that at our worship we are not just there for our own souls' health, but also for that of all those for whom this Christian community actually exists. As Archbishop William Temple once famously said, 'The Church is the one organization which exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members.' W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray for this church and parish, and in the worldwide Church we pray today for those who belong to the family of Lutheran Churches. In the Diocese of Guildford we pray for the Department of Ministerial Training, remembering in particular our own Ordinand on the Diocesan Ministerial Course, Iain McKillop. Within the parish community we pray for those who organize or

attend the Wednesday Coffee Mornings, and for those who provide our *après messe* coffee on Sundays. We pray too for the people of Park Hill Road.

SUNDAY SERVICES

- 0800 HOLY COMMUNION** *Common Worship rite*
Order 1: page 167. Collect of the Day: page 422.
Eucharistic Prayer A: page 184. Proper 25.
- 0930 SUNG EUCHARIST** (Nave Altar) *Common Worship rite*

There is a separate leaflet for this service. The green hymn-books are needed, and also *A Hundred Hymns for Ewell*. Crèche available on request.

Preacher: *The Vicar*.
Setting of the Eucharist: *Shaw*, Folk Mass.

It is Half-Term for the choir today, and all the singing is congregational. Because of this we shall not be having the usual '**Procession of the Scriptures**', which we normally have on *Bible Sunday*, because the vast hymn which holds it all together will certainly be too much for the congregation today. However, the leaflet will still be given out for use as a resource during the sermon, and an abbreviated form of the hymn will be used at the Offertory.

Eucharistic Prayer C. Proper 25.
Hymns: 467, 407, HHE 57 (t.201), [HHE 75], 438 (t.296 i).
Organ: tba (JH)

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 MATTINS** *Book of Common Prayer rite.*
(*'Village Mattins' today; it is the choir half-term. Small red hymn-books*)
Sermon by *the Vicar*
Responses: page 8.
Metrical Jubilate: Hymn (AMR) 166
Psalm 119: 89-104. *In praise of the written Law of the Lord.* Page 285
First Lesson: *The prophet tells of an earthly native land.* Blue book: page 745
Benedictus: page 11 (*recited today*)
Second Lesson: *The Apostle tells of our true native land.* Blue book: page 746
Hymn: AMR 251
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 80).
Prayers. Hymn: AMR 252; Collection. The Blessing
Organ: Prelude and Fugue in G minor. *Buxtehude* RH

1800 Evening Prayer in the Parish Room.

In church this week.

There are no liturgical services in church this week. A list is available (a copy is on the west door) with details of the Tuesday Eucharist between now and 6 January. There are just a few occasions when it is not taking place for one reason or another.

Other events and notices.

- Monday 2000 Meeting of 'Pro Musica.'
Tuesday 1030 The Vicar attends the Royal British Legion Poppy Launch for the County of Surrey at King Edward's School, Witley.
1430 External Affairs Committee.
Wednesday 1030-1200 Coffee Morning in the Church Hall. All welcome.

‘Have a break; have a coffee.’ (Or tea, if you prefer.)

See also below.

1930 Meeting of the Estates Committee.

The Wednesday Coffee Morning. Grand Bring and Buy Sale this week. This is the last Coffee Morning *Bring and Buy Sale* in its present form, as Barbara Cannon has decided to ‘hang up her cash box.’ We thank Barbara for the large contribution she has made by running these sales over the last few years to raise money for the Jeel al Amal Boys Home in Bethany. We are hoping to start a form of themed Table Top Sales next year. Meanwhile, let’s try and make it a special date on Wednesday. ‘Edibles’ are always popular, and the success of the sale will depend on *your* support. J.B.

Ewell Parish News for November is available today.

Application forms for the **Gala Dinner** to be held on Saturday 3 January to mark the Vicar’s retirement are now available in the Welcome Area. It has to be done this way for security reasons at the T.A., and names and addresses are needed. The forms are easily found: they are in a garish shade of dayglo pink.

Posters for the Carol Service in aid of *CHASE hospice care* on 10 December have now arrived. This promises to be a splendid evening. It is organized by – and more importantly *through* – the well-known magazine *SURREY LIFE*. Whilst many members of the congregation will doubtless want to come, it is clear that there will be quite a large congregation from all over Surrey, so one will probably need to book fairly *pronto* for this. You actually pay to go to church, for once: £10, or £15 if going on to the party afterwards. Max Clifford and Dame Jacqueline Wilson will be there. To reserve tickets and for more information please call 01903 703745. **N.B. This is not being arranged through the Parish Office.**

The Notes. From time to time a plea is made for the Notes to be taken away for reference during the week. It is no help to us when the Notes are handed in, not least because an adequate number is produced each week, and people at later services do not necessarily want slightly crumpled copies. Also, whilst the Sunday readings may be handed in, they can also be kept, if people want them.

Epistle Readers at 0930. Would those who have not picked up a slip next to the service-papers on the table near the west door, please do so? There is a revised drill to ensure that the Epistle begins without a long delay while the reader walks to the lectern. Whilst it is clear that some have read this slip, it is also clear that there are some who haven’t. Today is a fairly ordinary Sunday, actually a bit simpler than usual in style. Most of the small measures taken to make the service more streamlined are having some effect, the basic principle being that item follows item with no unnecessary delay.

However, anent that last point, two points at the Sung Eucharist are beginning to get a bit wobbly once again, with the potential for causing delays; at least, one did so last week and the other the week before (or perhaps it was the week before that). First of all, the **bread and wine** need to be brought up during the *first verse* of the Offertory hymn. Last week nothing happened until the third verse of a six-verse hymn, and then only after I had beckoned rather conspicuously from the other end of the church. Whilst this may seem a bit nit-picking, the fact remains that a lot has to be done after the elements arrive (putting the appropriate amount of bread in the three ciboria, charging the chalices with wine and water, and arranging them tidily on the corporal, and saying the *Berakhoth* prayers*, and last Sunday all this had to be done with unseemly haste), and we can do without the delay. Also some people are still hanging around after handing over their vessels; please **go at once**. Secondly, the Collection **must** be brought up as soon as it is completed; if the Sunday School collection has not arrived, then the collectors must go without the children, and, when this happens, the children’s collection is simply not brought up until after the service. Also the same applies to placing the bags in the plate; once this is done, please **go at once**, one after the other. ‘Mood music’ on the organ after the Offertory hymn should normally only be needed, when there is a large congregation, and the collection has taken longer than usual. Even when incense is used at the Offertory a six-verse hymn of six-line verses should be more than adequate to cover the action. It would help considerably if whoever is the ‘person in charge’ at the back of the church on a particular Sunday took very firm control over this part of the service. W.R.H.

* The technical terms in this parenthesis are, with one possible exception, fairly common ones in in-house church-speak. If anyone doesn't know, say, what a ciborium is, please ask. W.R.H.

Next Sunday. It is **All Saints Day**. There is a major liturgical gear-change next week, and we shall be in that in-between world (i.e. between the Trinity season and Advent) with its devotional concentration on the saints and souls of the Calendar, and then on the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, culminating after four weeks in the acknowledgement of the victory of Christ and his eternal Kingship. There are several distinctive features in church during November, and much of this is detailed in *Ewell Parish News*. The mood in church swings from the joy of the saints, to the sober commemoration of the souls departed, National Remembrance, the longing prayer of the Church for 'the promised time' of righteousness and peace, until we finally reach the festival of Christ the King and the realization that, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the victory belongs to Christ, and we are back to the note of joy with which the month began. It is good that the Christian Year now ends on a note of assurance and confidence in the modern calendars; it wasn't always thus. Then it begins all over again the following Sunday, as Advent begins.

Next Sunday there will be the familiar joyful hymns about the saints, with a Procession at the Sung Eucharist and *Harwood's* splendid anthem 'O how glorious is the kingdom.' The advertised setting of the Eucharist will be changed from *Palestrina's* 'Missa Papae Marcelli' to his more familiar setting, 'Missa Aeterna Christi munera.' The choir has a very heavy work-load at the moment, and it is not practical to take the other setting on board just yet. There is Mattins and Holy Baptism at 1100, and at 1700 there will be Choral Evensong with some particularly lovely Renaissance music. The choir will be having a party with fireworks and bonfire afterwards.

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