

St Mary the Virgin
EWELL PARISH CHURCH
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WEEKLY NOTES

21 December 2008

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

There is no room for the usual Sunday paragraph today, so I take the opportunity to wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas. W.R.H.

Our prayers today. We pray for this church and parish, and in the worldwide Anglican Communion we pray today for the Church in Brazil. In the Diocese of Guildford we pray for the work of 'Neighbours in Need' (formerly known as 'The Bishop of Guildford's Foundation'. Within the parish we pray for the parish members of the Mothers' Union, and in our systematic prayer for the parish we pray today for those living in Purberry Shot.

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 HOLY COMMUNION *Common Worship rite.*
Order 1: page **167**. Collect of the Day: page **378**.
Eucharistic Prayer **E**: page **196**. Other Advent material: page **300**.

0930 SUNG EUCHARIST *Common Worship rite.*

There is a separate leaflet for this service. Children's Hour; Crèche available on request. Hymns on another leaflet and from *A Hundred Canticles for Ewell*.

Preacher: *The Vicar*

Eucharistic Prayer F.

Setting of the Eucharist: *Hassler*, Missa Dixit Maria.

Hymns: 19 (1,2 adjusted, 6,7,8), HHE 23 (1-4; t.11), do.5-8, HCE 3 (t.427),

People look east.

Anthem: Dixit Maria. *Hassler*

Organ: Sleigh Ride. *Leroy Anderson* JH

Welcome to any visitors or newcomers to St Mary's today. Please make yourselves known. Coffee is in church today because of the General Decoration (see below).

1100 CHORAL MATTINS.

NOTE: THIS WILL BE A VERY SHORT SERVICE – PROBABLY LESS THAN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

Responses: page 8.

Music: *Byrd*

Jubilate (Psalm 100): page 254.

Music: *Ireland* in F

Psalm 138: 1-6.

Page 301.

Universal praise for the Lord God, who Lord exalts the humble and meek.

First Lesson: Zephaniah 3: 14-20.

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

Benedictus: page 11.

Second Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

St Paul preaches the incarnate and risen Christ as he begins his letter to the Christians in Rome.

Hymn: AMR 58 (Collection).

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

o/c GENERAL DECORATION OF THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS.

This paragraph is included by design in the '*Sunday Services*' section of the Notes. Last week I emphasised the point that today's morning liturgy *involves us all*, and does so in an unusual way. '*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. More importantly, it is also a natural and homely piece of enacted incarnational theology, and in that sense it is actually a *devotional* pre-Christmas activity. As one of the Advent hymns puts it: '*Prepare we in our hearts a home, where such a mighty guest may come.*' And for 'hearts' also read 'church' in this particular instance. 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. W.R.H.

1700 A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS.

There is a special leaflet for this service. Some copies of this are available for inspection this morning in the Welcome Area. It promises to be a great occasion.

In church this week.

Tuesday 1000 **Holy Communion**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). For anyone who wishes to use this ministry before Christmas, the Vicar will be in church on Tuesday and on Christmas Eve at noon, or by appointment.

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. The Junior Choristers will be singing at the service, but it will not be a 'choral service' in the sense that the others are, though they will be singing one or two items. It is very much a family occasion, and its style is very informal.

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. Details of this music will be on a slip with the Midnight Mass leaflet.*

2345 PROCESSION AND MIDNIGHT MASS OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.

Setting of the Eucharist: *Langlais*, Missa Salve Regina (see below).

Anthem: *In dulci jubilo. arr. Pearsall.*

Preacher: *The Reverend Dr Patrick Miller. 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: *Jenkinson*, Mass for Midnight (see below).

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.

Note: 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 circumstances are now different, 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 again this year for those who would value it.

Other notices: Christmas and general.

Music at Midnight Mass. Most years we have had a Viennese setting of the Mass at this service: Mozart, Haydn or Schubert. This year, as last year, we are having a change, and the setting of the Eucharist will be the very powerful *Missa Salve Regina* by the French composer *Jean Langlais*. It is based on one of the many plainsong melodies of the famous prayer *Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae* (some may remember another such melody from the musical *Evita*). It is very atmospheric and triumphal, and even though it is a twentieth century work, it somehow has a medieval feel to it, and one which is greatly enhanced by the trumpets and trombones, which were intended by the composer, but which are not within our financial power to provide on this occasion. (No doubt the wonderful reed chorus on the Great Organ – the middle keyboard – at St Mary's will be in evidence at some point.) To counterbalance that, there will be the much-loved *a capella* setting of the carol *In dulci jubilo* by the nineteenth century composer, *R L Pearsall*. One or two of the more distinctive carols from tonight's *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* may well be sung by the choir, when they are singing their usual 'Gallery Carols' before Midnight Mass. There will, of course, be the familiar rousing Christmas hymns and carols at the service.

Music at the Eucharist at the Crib on Christmas morning. 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 did this setting once again at last year's Midnight Mass, and it seems right for the Christmas morning congregation to encounter this delightful setting as well. There is a very predictable congregational refrain during the *Gloria*. As at Midnight Mass, there will, of course, be lots of the familiar Christmas hymns and carols at the service as well.

There is no **Coffee Morning** this week; it resumes on 31 December.

Edna Attwood writes to wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas, and a happy New Year. She is staying at Priory Court to enable daily treatment to take place. She will be at church when she can, from time to time, and hopes to come to the Gala Dinner.

The External Affairs Committee will soon be thinking about our Lent Project for 2009, and they would welcome suggestions, and also ideas for the four 'Gift Day Charities' next year. Please contact Lynne Yuille in the office in the first instance. The committee will be meeting again in January. Also, next year's **Lent Lunches** are being arranged: the dates are 4, 11, 18, and 25 March. Anyone who would be willing to run one of these sessions (basically it is a case of soup, bread and cheese) would be very popular with the External Affairs Committee. Again, please contact Lynne Yuille, if you are able to help.

The Consecration Bell. The Vicar mentioned some time ago in church that normally the consecration bell at the Sung Eucharist is at present normally rung by members of the congregation who happen to be bell-ringers. It is not essential that this should be so, since none of the specific arts of bell-ringing really apply. You just have to be able to pull, just like every new Vicar does at his Induction. Until fairly recent years churchwardens and sidesmen played their part in doing this. Occasionally there is no-one available from the tower, and the bell is not rung, which is a pity, and this seems to have been the case more frequently of late. Not all churches ring the tower bell at the consecration, but this has been the practice at St Mary's for very many years (long before the present Vicar arrived here), and it is a good thing to happen, because it serves both as an indication and as a reminder to the rest of the parish that St Mary's people are there in church on Sunday, and that the Holy Eucharist is being offered for the people of the parish, and not just for the Christians inside the building. Anyone who is willing to help in this way (probably only very occasionally) is asked to have a word with one of the churchwardens in the first instance, so that we do not have days when the consecration bell is silent. The one volunteer so far has not in fact been able to take it on, for perfectly valid reasons, so we are still in need, and in any case we could do with more than one volunteer. It would be good if this were to be sorted out before the Vicar's departure, for it may be a bit irritating to visiting clergy who find that the consecration bell is something which might or might not happen. A little practice can be arranged, if necessary.

There are still a few **FREE** copies of *El Dorado*, the Guyana Diocesan Magazine, available in the Welcome Area. It tells of a brave Church facing difficult times in a society very different from our own. The current number contains the sad, but not unexpected, news that Bishop Randolph (who is, in fact, in his eighties) retires at the end of the year, so it is unlikely that we shall be seeing him any more at St Mary's.

The Post-Communion Prayer in Advent. We have been making use 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 in *Common Worship* 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.

Next Sunday. 'Basic Liturgy.' The Sunday after Christmas is always a gentle affair in church, and the choir has a much-needed Sunday off. The 0800 and 1100 services will be of the Sunday after Christmas; the 0930 Eucharist will be of the Holy Innocents. In last year's Notes for Advent 4 it said: 'The Vicar will be Canon Pooh-Bah next Sunday (Gilbert and Sullivan *aficionados* will understand): celebrant, preacher, leading the intercessions, playing the organ, and no doubt plugging other gaps. Twice a year this happens – Low Sunday is the other occasion – but not for much longer.' In fact this will be the last time, and other arrangements will now need to be put in place on these two Sundays. Since the Vicar is also an organist, this one-man-band act has until now been possible, and it has in fact been generally convenient to do it this way, but it is not an ideal situation, and it will obviously have to alter in the future.

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