

Edenbridge Parish News

Evensong: Why do we do it every Sunday?

So why do we do Evensong at 6.30pm on almost every Sunday? Isn't it enough to have our Eucharist in the morning? What is Evensong anyway?

The dear old C of E claims with some justification to have its roots in the medieval Church brought to these shores by the likes of St Augustine in 597 AD at the instigation of Pope Gregory the Great. He, so the story goes, saw some Anglo-Saxon children up for sale in the local slave market, said something like '*non angli sed angeli*'* and decided such cherubic people had a right to hear the gospel. Augustine was duly despatched.

Now, dear old Augustine was a Benedictine monk so spent a lot of his day saying/singing various 'offices' with his brethren. These 'offices' were services of psalms and readings of varying lengths spread throughout the day from dawn till night and were understood to sanctify the passing hours.

The mission to England set up Cathedrals and Abbeys here and there, staffed by monks all busy singing their offices when not out tilling the land or converting the locals. Said locals got used to these offices and so the good medieval Englishman grew used to going not just to Sunday mass but also to the principal offices

of Mattins and Evensong.

The service of Evensong that we have today represents the amalgam devised by chancellor Thomas Cranmer during the Reformation. In it we have the office of Vespers with its psalms and the *Magnificat* with the confession and the *Nunc Dimittis* from Compline. Cranmer was also keen on having two chunks of scripture also thrown in for the edification of the people.

This service rapidly drew the attention of some of the finest composers of English Church music and is possessed of an amazing repertoire of some of the best music you'll hear in any church anywhere. English Cathedrals still have no trouble drawing visitors from all over the world to be carried along by the beauty of their offerings.

Here in Edenbridge our choir do a pretty good job too, though the numbers of people who appreciate their efforts with anthems and hymns, other than during festal events, is much less than at the morning services.

So if you don't believe how that 'pretty good job' can be just come along at 6.30pm and listen!

In fact why not make a thing of coming to Evensong on Sundays during this coming Lent. You'll rapidly find that what you might think of as a penance turns into a joy!

Fr Stephen Mitchell

*'Not Angles but angels.'



Allow me to introduce myself

A few words from Rev'd Sue Diggory, the lady from up the hill

Father Stephen has very kindly suggested that I write a few words to tell you a little about myself as my husband Richard and I prepare to move into the vicarage at Crockham Hill, and I am licensed as vicar by Bishop Brian on Wednesday, 26 March.

Richard and I had been part of St Mark's at Tunbridge Wells for more than 30 years and felt that moving to a new parish was not really on our agenda. But of course it is not our agenda that is important; it is what God wants that matters and so we find ourselves in the process of packing up a house that we have lived in as a family for 26 years and preparing to be part of a new church family as we await the removal van and the journey to Crockham Hill.

We thought we were settled, but of course as Christians we are pilgrims and so we are having to pull up the 'tent pegs' and set out on a new adventure with God, an adventure that in many ways began in

2001 when I started the Diocese's Faith and Ministry Course.

After that I trained as a Reader and St Peter and Paul in Edenbridge was where I arrived on placement for Lent 2003 under the guidance of Father Stephen. Little did I know that 11 years later I would be re-



turning to the area in a permanent but different capacity.

Amongst all the papers that I have been clearing out I found the report I wrote on my placement to a church whose tradition was at that time a very new

experience for me. I wrote of the warm welcome I received from the church, and how everyone went out of their way to put me at ease as I experienced and grew in Christ. As I look back, the time I spent with you was a very significant step on both my journey to ordination in 2009 and to applying for the post of vicar 'up the hill'.

I look forward to renewing a close working relationship with Father Stephen in the many things we can and will do together, to getting to know Edenbridge as a member of the local community, and welcoming any of you who find yourselves venturing up the hill.

God Bless, Sue Diggory

Bringing children into the Church

It's said that Church congregations are diminishing. But that is not the case with St Peter and St Paul's.

A Church that has no children will indeed die as the congregation gets older and depart, so for a Church to survive and grow then children must be at the centre of everything that happens under its roof.

At St Peter and St Paul's we are proud that we encourage children into the services. There is an area at the back of the church where children can sit and colour or read or just play while their parents are engaged in the service. We do not want for any parent to feel that they cannot attend our services for fear of their child making a noise.

But how can they learn about our Christian faith? That very important job is down to the Sunday Club. We follow the same lectionary as the Church but we teach it in a child friendly manner; allowing the children to ask questions and approach many concepts within our faith in a more simple manner.

Once a year we take our young people to a Christian camp for the weekend. It is a time for the children to experience rowdy Christian activities, together with quiet Christian prayer time. It allows the children to socialise with others within the group. In this you will

see some of our young people attending youth worship at the event. If anyone is interested in joining us then see Hilary Morgan, who can provide the necessary information.

We lead services as well and the important one coming up is Mothering Sunday (30 March), when this year we are going to remember what it might have been like in March 1914.



Parish Office Administrator/PA

Ss Peter & Paul Parish Church, Edenbridge requires a Parish Office Administrator/PA to assist Rev'd Stephen Mitchell in the running of the Parish Office.

Hours of work: Provisionally 16 per week, spread over four mornings (Mon, Wed, Thurs & Fri).

For more details and a full job description please contact Mrs Carole Feakes on 01732 867820

Food, fun and fair trade in Edenbridge

An evening of food, fun and fairness is on offer at The Eden Centre as Edenbridge shows its support for Fairtrade Fortnight (24 February - 9 March).

The town's own 'Come Dine With Us' on Monday 3 March involves six local chefs preparing dishes using Fairtrade ingredients for the evening's guest diners.

It is being organised by the Edenbridge Fairtrade Town Group and starts at 6pm with a welcome drink. There are just 100 spaces at £7.50 each with tickets available from the six venues supporting the event: Quality Tandoori, Jo Banks from Jo's Pampered Chef Party, The Old Eden, the Oak Tree Bistro, hft Ltd, La Botte Restaurant & Wine Bar and Andy Lamar.

Organiser and eAt@Eden café coordinator Rachel Ledwith says: "As well as showing local support for Fairtrade Fortnight and giving people a great evening out, we believe this is a great opportunity for our team to work with professional chefs on a large scale event."

God's Hands in the box



Chris Ginter and Parish Nurse Julie Barry delivered food contributions from the God's Hands project to 40 families before Christmas. Helen

Vaughan says that canned foods, especially whole meals in a tin with vegetables and potatoes are welcome in the bin (pictured) at the back of the Church, which is emptied on Wednesday mornings.

Monetary contributions can be made in a marked envelope placed in the wall box. Chris and Julie offer to pray with and for the families and are encouraged by recognising God's work in their lives.

Diary dates

Wednesday 5 March

Ash Wednesday, 10.30am & 8pm

Wednesday 12 March

7.45pm for 8 Lent Groups 1

Wednesday 19 March

7.45pm for 8 Lent Groups 2

Saturday 22 March

10am-2pm Eden Valley Museum – amongst local history groups – will be displaying collections on World War 1 at Sevenoaks Library

Wednesday 26 March

7.45pm for 8 Lent Groups 3

Sunday 30 March

Mothering Sunday
9.30am Eucharist

Thursday 17 April

8.30pm Maundy Thursday

Friday 18 April

2.30pm Good Friday service

Sunday 20 April

6.00am Easter Vigil
9.30am Easter Sunday Eucharist
6.30pm Easter Festal Evensong

Compline services will be held at 9pm on Sat 29 March, Sat 5 April, Sat 12 April, and Mon to Wed 14-16 April

Edenbridge Parish News is published monthly by the Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul, Church Street, Edenbridge, Kent. Contact Fr Stephen Mitchell. Tel: 01732 862258.

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