

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 192 December 1990

## Editorial CALENDARS

When better to look at Calendars than as a Decade passes into the night, and another one as inevitably begins? I am prompted in that direction not only by the hovering presence of *Promise*, but also by the latest production of the Joint Liturgical Group, *A Four-year Lectionary*, published by Canterbury Press, Norwich, on 30 November (30pp., £1.50), and, what I am not supposed to mention yet, a second round of *Towards Liturgy 2000*, to be published in January, with the early eschatological title, *Liturgy for a New Century*. (That has calendrical nudges in it, but all will be revealed next month).

In *Promise*, the intended synodical treatment was set out last month. All the text that can receive the House of Bishops' blessing has it – it is 'commended'. But the calendar and lectionary provisions cannot be so commended: they need authorization by the usual exacting synodical route. So anything can happen, though the heavies on the Liturgical Commission who devised it will be there in the Revision Committee guarding it, if I can indulge in a predictive guess. At any rate, even if all of *Promise* comes out in one book (most of the candliferous occasions being 'commended', but the calendar and lectionary not), we can see that the two parts will then start to travel separate routes.

The connection between *JLG 2* (which is the sub-title of *A Four-year Lectionary*) and the calendar in *Promise* is that both are re-working the same original scheme (dubbed '*JLG 1*' in the booklet) – the recommendations of the original JLG in *The Calendar and Lectionary* (Oxford, 1967). It is that which is broadly enshrined in the ASB, and that which is thus in use in thousands of Anglican parishes.

It has to be said that JLG wishes to honour its ancestors, whilst *Promise* hardly acknowledges they exist. JLG retains the principle of nine Sundays running up to Christmas (and beginning with creation), and, although it has now followed popular adaptation and inserted an Epiphany season, it still has nine Sundays before Easter, six after Easter, twenty-two after Pentecost (reducible), and a separate mandatory Last Sunday after Pentecost. Obviously JLG's great concern has been to provide a stable all-the-year-round framework for its new lectionary proposals. The latter do go some way to acknowledging defects in the 'two-year' Sunday scheme, and are more closely modelled on the Roman Catholic principle of years assigned to each of the Gospels (only JLG has now come up with *four* Gospels, making four years), and a playing down of thematic links between the various readings.

*Promise* can of course be used – and used enrichingly – on the existing ASB calendar basis. And that is legally what *might* be happening as I write (on the evening of St. Nicholas' Day – who gets quite near to having

his own candle on page 359), whilst the materials are 'commended' but the calendar and lectionary are strictly illegal. But it looks as though the Commission's eggs are really in its 'Alternative Lectionary' basket – which requires the alternative calendar (*Promise* pp.333f.). And there all becomes clear – the Commission have hit upon a seven Sunday run-up to Christmas (not BCP, nor JLG, nor even Ambrosian Advent), three 'Sundays of the Kingdom' and then four of Advent. Christmas is as it was, with up to two Sundays following it. Epiphany is not a day but a season (like 'The Kingdom' and Advent), so that Sundays are Sundays 'of Epiphany' not 'after' it – and the first is headlined 'The Baptism of Christ'. There are then three more, and then 'The Presentation of Christ in the Temple' (which, oddly, has its existing legal title in the section where it is known new authorization would be needed, and its illegal title in the section where it is simply 'commended'). The Commission would like the Epiphany season to end on 2 February ('Good-bye to Christmas – hallo to Passiontide'), so it adds (p.355) 'Sundays after the Presentation should be designated Sundays before Easter'. This *could* mean, when Easter fell on 13 April or after, that there would be ten or more 'Sundays before Easter' (what about 'Decagesima' 'Nonagesima' and 'Octogesima' – or, as the Latin titles are all wrong anyway, 'Duodecagesima'?).

We need not stay on the lectionary proposals, though 'Lectionary 1' is on a three-year principle, and 'Lectionary 2' declares a close season from Advent 3 to Epiphany 1, and then offers 'semi-continuous reading of scripture' before and after that period – from Old Testament, Epistles and Revelation, and to be used at the discretion of the parish.

It is just worth noting what Synod will be facing when this calendrical material comes to it. There already exist alongside each other and unreconciled the BCP calendar and the ASB one (virtually '*JLG 1*'). An attempt was made in the period 1980-85 to get the Synod to adopt the modern Roman Catholic one (as an experiment), which involves the principle of 'Sundays of the Year', and they begin straight after the Feast of the Epiphany. The Liturgical Commission put up a balanced report, and held back from recommending the Roman practice – and the further 'experimentation' was turned down (not least because the Archbishop of York said an experiment conducted by a small untypical self-selected bunch of persons for their own purposes on an open-ended ticket was no experiment!). But now the Commission is not only itself recommending a third Calendar and Lectionary (as an experimental option), but has ceased to say *anything* about that which it brought into use itself in the ASB – O Tempora, O Fasti.

The whole candle syndrome in *Promise* has a clearly 'winter season' (see p.2 etc.) character to it. But this is neither Eastern nor Western (our usual division) but Northern! I know that we do not now pretend that we are legislating for Christmas Day on Bondi beach, or Candlemas on Tahiti, but it should perhaps be noted that the whole 'winter' background is, if not actually parochial, at least regional. And the attraction of the Roman rites was, I understand, their universality, to be set over against the British Isles parochialism of the JLG pattern. To be sure, in early days of NOL, we recorded that the diocese of Christchurch in New Zealand took a motion to their Provincial Synod asking for Christmas to be kept on 25 June (in order to give themselves a much-needed Winter Festival) but it was laughed out there. The notion that Jesus was born when 'snow had fallen, snow

on snow' and that his birth has to be celebrated in wintry conditions could only stem from Northerners, and the same would apply to 'dark' themes of the departed and of Advent, and to the 'lightening' themes of Epiphany and that candle feast. So I think some slight steadying of the headstrong calendrical horses might be in order. Our calendar was not built round the weather or the hours of daylight, and we need care before we invent a foundational holy winter season onto which we then build according to *Promise*.

NOL wishes its readers a happy and candle-lit Christmas for the sixteenth year running, and notches up nineteen years of numbered Grove Booklets on 31 December. There is strong temptation to stray into political events, let alone into the issue of homelessness in Britain today. Our Christmas can hardly shrug these things, these people, off. May the prince of peace guide us all.

Colin Buchanan

PS: That personal news bit again. I move house on 11 January and have put new address and phone-number on the back of this. FAX number will follow next month. Institution is on 26 January (the Saturday next before Candlemas) at 2.30 p.m. Your prayers are asked for a raw new incumbent. I also need a secretary urgently – any likely candidate round your way? And my liturgical doings may become totally redundant (I am getting it out of my system this month), as the diocesan profile re-appears in January.

## BIDDING PRAYERS FOR THE DECADE OF EVANGELISM

Let us pray for all whom Christ sends as his apostles, that they may witness to the gospel of resurrection:

*Silence*

Lord, let your ways be known on earth

**Your saving power among all nations**

[repeated after each bidding]

Let us pray for all whom Christ calls to be his prophets, that they may open the eyes of the blind to the gospel of righteousness and peace:

Let us pray for all whom Christ calls to be his teachers, that they may lead Christians to understand the content of the gospel and its meaning for today:

Let us pray for all whom Christ calls to be his evangelists, that they may lead those outside the church to fullness of Christian life through the gospel:

Let us pray for all whom Christ calls to be pastors and shepherds, that they may live the gospel life of caring and self-giving love:

Let us pray for all whom Christ calls to be his healers and helpers, that their gospel hands may be signs and agents of the kingdom of heaven:

Norman Wallwork

*For your own prayers:*

*You may find it helpful to write down*

*Someone known to you*

*Something of concern in your local community*

*Something planned in your local church*

[From *A Call to Pray for a Decade 1991-2000* by Churches Together in England].

## INFANT BAPTISM AGAIN

The Manchester Diocese Continuing Ministerial Education scheme sponsored a day conference on infant baptism on November 6. The aim of the day was to explore some of the issues surrounding 'open' versus 'discriminate' baptism of infants. The two main speakers were Mark Dalby, who, readers of NOL will know, recently wrote a defence of open baptism which included some rather sweeping attacks on Grove publications and Gordon Kuhrt's *Believing in Baptism*, and Peter Hobson, rector of St. Bride's, Old Trafford and member of MORIB.

Apart from input from these two speakers, there were small groups to generate a list of issues which we would like to see debated and, later in the day, small groups to tackle one or two specific areas. It will come as no surprise to say that the day was inconclusive. Some may have been surprised to see that the most vocal discriminate baptiser present was an Anglo-Catholic priest.

For me, some of the interesting issues arising from the day were:

1. Is a discriminate policy only viable in a parish where there are comparatively few requests for baptism each year? In a parish like ours, with over 100 requests a year, the sheer volume of interviewing and counselling would seem to prohibit the kind of approach that some parishes take.

2. COB and others rightly point out that we no longer live in a state of Christendom. In a place like Old Trafford it is clear that traditions of church going died out a few generations ago. However, parishes like Urmston and Worsley (where Mark Dalby is rector) are much more traditional in their expectations of ministry. It is not medieval Christendom but it is not a case of the unchurched masses either. Lots of people in these places regard themselves as having some link with the parish church, however tenuous. What kind of policy is appropriate in these parishes?

3. Some of those who operate a discriminatory policy link this with high moral standards on the part of the parents. One incumbent in our diocese will not baptize the baby if the parents are not legally married. (I also heard recently of someone who would not marry a couple who were already living together unless they separated until the wedding day). It seems to me that this misunderstands the nature of marriage (for a couple in a stable relationship are surely *de facto* married – see Grove Ethical Study 69) as well as being pastorally insensitive to the point of being offensive. We do not enquire if the parents are embezzling vast sums of money from work and neither do we expect Christian parents to be completely free from sin. If baptism is a sacrament of the grace of God, such pastoral practices as these surely speak of a vengeful, legalistic God.

4. Do we expect parents to be more articulate than they are able? Many people seem to have some kernel of faith which needs encouragement to grow. Too strict a baptismal practice may kill that growth rather than encourage it.

Having laid out these four questions, I still remain more convinced of some sort of discriminatory policy than I do of Mark Dalby's open one, though I would evidently not be as strict as some people. At the end of the day, it was an encouraging sign that the CME committee laid on this day conference (though a pity that it was limited to clergy). Have other dioceses done similarly?

Charles Read

## A RESOURCE FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY

We have received a hymn by Michael Saward written especially for the 'oiling' rite on Maundy Thursday, and, so he informs us, already incorporated in to the rite for 1991 in the Willesden Area. The text is here, though it should only be lifted with copyright permission from the author – Ealing Vicarage, 11 Church Place, London W5 4HN (soon to be at Amen Court, St. Paul's).

## FOR THE MAUNDY THURSDAY OILS SERVICE

Redeemer, Lord, your praise we sing  
and magnify your holy name  
your gift of oil to you we bring,  
to us your saving power proclaim!

The sun in splendour warmed the ground  
that nourishes the olive tree  
whose laden branches all around  
give oil for our infirmity.

So now this oil be richly blessed  
to us and all who feel its power  
and may your name, in faith confessed  
bring healing in a needful hour.

From those baptized, let Satan flee  
his evil malice be undone,  
signed with the cross, the oil shall be  
a symbol of the war begun.

In every service, every task,  
may your anointing warm our soul  
that by your Spirit, as we ask,  
the sign of oil shall make us whole.

Then let this time of vows renewed  
recall the Lord who died to save,  
and at his table, heaven's food  
proclaim his empty cross and grave.

©Michael Saward, 17 April, 1990

Tune: Agincourt (*A & M Revised* 501)

## HOUSE OF BISHOPS OCTOBER 1990

As often before, we report the House of Bishops meeting of 16 October a little late. We noted last month that the House 'commended' everything but the calendar and new lectionaries in *Promise of His Glory*, though, for the record, the minutes also refer to some 'amending' (which is largely the separation of that material from the rest of the report), and add that the House 'noted it would be published in time for All Saints Day 1991'. Our understanding is that it will be much earlier, and commentaries (including a prospective Grove Booklet) are promised for around April.

The previous minute is of interest and is worth reproducing *verbatim*:

### *Christian Initiation Matters*

- The House considered the papers concerning Communion before Confirmation and draft rites for the renewal of faith, for reconciliation and healing, and for reception into the Church of England, which had been requested at the June meeting of the House in the further preparation for a debate in General Synod in July 1991.'

This indicates that proposals are due to converge upon the Synod down three different routes for next June – the admission to communion material from within the House of Bishops, the liturgical material from the Liturgical Commission, and a further treatment of initiation issues in the long-awaited 'Reardon Report'.

### **This month's booklet . . .**

is Joint Liturgical Study 16, *Cremation Today and Tomorrow*, by Douglas Davies. The basis of this Study is a set of enquiries by both the author and the Cremation Society into people's beliefs and instincts concerning death, disposal, ashes, and eschatology. It concludes with an original design for a cremation service, and, whilst rigorous in its own procedures, lingers near to the very practical in both pastoral wisdom and ritual suggestions.

### **. . . and next month's**

is Worship Series no. 115, *The Liturgical Ministry of a Reader*, by Carolyn Headley, Team Minister at St. Margaret's, Uxbridge, and Warden of Readers for the Willesden Area. This is written, after wide consultation, to mark and enrich the year of the 125th anniversary of the beginning of Readers in the Church of England. (Prices are up in the New Year also – £1.60 for a standard booklet).

### **. . . and a long-awaited reprint**

is, *Thinking about Baptism*, which after nine printings in twelve years now has new cartoons by Taffy, a slight amending of the text, and a slight price-rise (20p each, and £8 for 50).

### **. . . and a 'New Titles' list**

is due next month.

### **. . . and if you pay by sub have you paid for 1991 yet?**

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## Book Review

David S. M. Hamilton, *Through the Waters: Baptism and the Christian Life* (T. and T. Clark, 1990, 136pp. pb., £9.95).

David Hamilton is lecturer in Practical Theology in the University of Glasgow, and gave the Croall Lectures at New College, Edinburgh in 1987 on baptismal issues. Now in this book he brings the material of the lectures together into an edited whole. In essence he is a modern representative of a 'national church' (i.e. the Kirk of Scotland), believing in infant baptism on principle, and ready to set out reasoning and defence for his position. Nor does he shirk practical issues, though his approach to them remains rather generalized and dispersed through the book.

His title might well have been 'Images of Baptism', for that is what his chapters are. The first is labelled 'Images', and then come: 'Washing', 'Deliverance', 'Birth', 'Belonging', and 'Celebration' (this last being about the liturgical rite). To one reader the treatment finally felt unsatisfactory – perhaps because as each 'image' is explored there comes a sense that Hamilton is treating the subject 'distributively'; whereas a rigorous exploration of all the themes of scripture could function in a 'contributory' way, it may be that the self-contained character of each original lecture tends in that direction. And, having this sense of a treatment – by images – of certain selected themes, I was itching to see how thorough his coverage of the total subject is. An index of scripture references would have been helpful for this, and, as it is, it is difficult to discover where any particular passage is under discussion, if at all.

It may be carping to go on to wonder whether other themes might not also have worked. Is 'initiation' itself a theme? Is coming under the Lordship of Christ a theme? Is being a beneficiary of God's grace a theme? Is 'putting on Christ' a theme? Or are the chapter headings he has *the* major themes? And, of course, the upshot of his method is that it is difficult to find the 'practical theology' – the handling of 're-baptism' issues are under 'Birth', and issues of the eligibility of particular categories of infants for baptism come under 'Belonging' – and I do not see how one could ever *know* in logic that these issues would come in these chapters.

The 'Celebration' chapter has an undefined link with an appendix which is his own 'An Order for Baptism'. He has a variety of liturgical concerns: notably not to do anything by proxy, and not to use vows or interrogations before baptism as though parents or candidates were passing some examination in order to qualify the child. He is only half in love with the Church of Scotland's own rites. The result to ASB Anglicans looks somewhat eccentric, but people should read the rest of the book also (where passing references to the liturgical concerns keep popping out).

I found myself not quite swallowing the disparagement of Matthew 28.16-20 (rejected on the *passé* grounds that Jesus was too primitive a figure in the Christian era to have been a Trinitarian!). I am not sure he is right on *anamnesis* ('we do not merely remember a distant Jesus of the past. He is re-called, called back, into our time and place.' (p.114) – which surely suggests he *is*, naturally, distant in time and space?). I doubt if Anglicans would cope with 'in this sacrament our baptism has been brought back to us.' (p.181). I cannot go with the 'incompatibility' of the

subjective and objective approaches he sets out (p.57). I am not sure we are helped by the Cullmann-like statement that Jesus' death is *the* baptism (p.51). And it is odd, though not his problem, to find 'immersion' used to mean what we call 'submersion'. I think he is wanting to give children communion (possibly even the unbaptized), and he is not afraid to be in tension with his own church. I remain slightly baffled, and do not think I have received the 'Practical Theology' very precisely. I think I shall still want to read it again. (But the price is high, especially when you see what last month's reviewer said about *Reforming Infant Baptism* (£5.99) last month . . .).

COB

## Correspondence

To the Editor of *News of Liturgy*

I also got a copy of the *Thomas Cranmer Essays*, reviewed by COB in November. But unlike him I didn't see many signs of sentimentalism in the chapters he singled out for adverse criticism: at least, no more than in his own earlier 'sigh for the simultaneous dismantling of the pew and the consequent facilitating of the true *meeting*' – which perhaps goes to show that even Homer nods . . .

What I did see coming through was an underlying plea for a different liturgical spirituality. There are those who want some audible links with the Church Historic and not just visual ones; who want a more reflective and rich style of worship, which they say the Cranmerian idiom allows them in a way that Rite A does not; and who say it's just *not true* that the only way you can share in a liturgy is by always being heard out loud. We can guess how uncongenial, and even distressing, they are going to find the heavily-responsive rites of *Patterns* and *Promise*.

What I don't see to any great extent is their point of view being taken seriously by liturgists. This disturbs me, because I think there is a lot in what they are saying. I am very contented user of the Rite A mass five days out of seven. On two days, however, we call on Series 1, and always use BCP for the office. The spirituality *is* different: I feel it every time I change from one to the other.

The fact the older one is out of fashion doesn't make it obscurantist, inappropriate or wrong. And the fact we've had rather a lot of it in the past doesn't mean we might not still need some of it in the present. Possibly Cranmer would not agree: but that's not quite the point, is it?

J. C. Thewlis

Secretary of Southwark Diocesan Liturgical Committee

[I find this a fascinating response, but I think I would still rather hold to the *realities*. My correspondent, for whom I go to preach on Epiphany Sunday in order to launch a certain Decade, clearly still has Cranmer *in his bones* – and that a newer generation does not. We may sigh and wish they had. He may hold such rites twice weekly. He may himself persuade a few lay-people to attend them. The authors I quoted may certainly sigh for us all to be BCP-formed. But the facts are not so, and are not going to become so, and cannot be either denied or evaded simply because some think that doses of BCP would be good for believers. I say this, as one who loves the BCP, without value-judgments. COB (NOL's nodding Homer)].

## COB's LITURGICAL DIARY

**August:** (6-10) Summer School at Edinburgh for part-time students of Scottish Episcopal Church, and I chair a group creating a final eucharist thematically setting out the kingdom of God – the sub-group working on the ministry of the word want instead of a Gospel a passage from Revelation, and we give it a musical overture (by clarinet), along with an introduction ('This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ which he gave to his servant John when he was in exile on Patmos near the end of the first century AD') and response – and write a special 'Scottish-style' eucharistic prayer, built in part round Romans 8.35-39; (28-30) Society for Liturgical Study at Nottingham – with Mar Thoma liturgy (see September NOL).

**September:** (2) on weekend away with Lewisham parish, try Rite C in the open air as closing feature; (8) launch of CCBI in Liverpool (see September NOL); (16) preaching at second anniversary of re-opening of Emmanuel Holloway, unexpectedly enlivened by presence of newly engaged couple (one Pat Dearnley and his fiancée) – and I get a word in about that – but also notable for an 'open' time post-communion, when prayers of thanks and petition are offered freely and flowingly (which the new building helps to happen, I guess); (18) from early morning 1662 of Doctrine Commission to two days of *Promise* at York (see September NOL); (30) afternoon with an LEP trying out their mutual relatingness away from their own premises for the first time ever – and ending with extempore prayer in informal eucharist, a wholly new experience for them.

**October:** (1-3) with Church Army at Swanwick – again trying out informal shared eucharist – Rite C arranged for harvest (by inserting creation acclamation into Eucharistic Prayer D); (13) Rochester diocesan synod, looking at plan for Decade of Evangelism, contained within an all-day framework of the eucharist; (14) St. Mary's, Reigate, where I am preaching on the future of our worship, and pursue my line about true participation involving speaking – and the curate, when I have preached, asks the congregation, some hundreds in number, to share needs informally with their neighbours, and then to pray for each other in pairs – *and the whole congregation does*; (19-21) away with a joyful Tunbridge Wells parish in Sussex – different musical responses in the eucharist, but one is gloriously simple: *Ein feste burg* for 'Blessing and honour and glory and power' (it works – try it); (28) evening service of thanksgiving-cum-closure at St. George's, Deal prior to re-ordering scheme beginning – a frolic of a service, enlivened by the announcement of a count of giving during the day (and it was £80,000 . . .), and punctuated by local dance group, who finally get me to skip in the aisle in a purple cassock.

**November:** (2-4) weekend away with Liverpool parish – on Sunday we have a Rite C eucharist, and I include *Promise* material for the intercessions – and a member asks for a ministry of healing, and I anoint her while thirty people crowd round to lay on hands; (6) I preside at communion in Salisbury/Wells Theological College at lunch-time – at precisely the identical time with the funeral in Birmingham of one of the bravest people I have ever known, Emma Hawkins, a woman deacon with cystic-fibrosis, who had a heart-lung transplant a year ago, but has now died suddenly – and the College congregation share in prayer with the Birmingham mourners; (8-9) GROW meet overnight, and exercise ourselves again with *Patterns* and *Promise* – but also try out the revised 'Queen's Rite'

(ecumenical for Queen's College, Brum); (11) civic remembrance service in Lewes, full of flags and colours and mayoral chains, followed by confirmation in Croydon; (14) Michael Heseltine decides to fight for the Prime Ministerial throne, and Daniel 12 in the readings of the day forecasts Michael fighting (Psalm 38 is interesting too) (but see 28 November below); (15) after end of Synod, I go to St. Andrew's, Sidcup, for a confirmation; (17-18) weekend at Ashted parish, with question-and-answer type of sermon morning and evening, and in the evening a pre-service gathering for prayer where pictures and words are shared, with then an adult baptism of a new convert (the order is intercessions, baptisms, peace, ministry of the word, eucharist!), and then time after communion for people to contribute what they have learned or discerned themselves during the rite, followed by the leadership sharing the original words and pictures to see if they match anyone's needs or experiences – and finally, as I stand near the door after the service two youngish people approach me, and, as they had heard of my appointment to Gillingham, offer to lay hands on me there and then and to pray for me, which I gladly accept, and they fulfil; (23) confirmation at Christ Church, Sutton – nine candidates, mostly young marrieds, and mostly there because of marriage (either past or in prospect) – a splendid 'feel' to it; (25) in morning a confirmation at West Wickham, marked by the inclusion of a well-converted woman who has a few months earlier been married and had her child baptized, *both in the same rite* (following what rubrics, I wonder) – and in the evening is the service I have been helping compile for a launch of the Decade of Evangelism at Southwark cathedral for representatives of all the Southwark parishes – a full house, and the rite seems to have 'worked' well, based on an ante-communion structure, but with considerable inter-action in the congregation (including two minutes after Bishop Nigel McCulloch's sermon in which each describes his or her Christian experience to a neighbour), and cross-examination of first bishops, then clergy, then laity, as to whether they would play their full part in the Decade (they all dutifully said they would) – ending with 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' (called the 'Shiny Song' on our committee!), and the inevitable candle – and it all now goes off to the parishes for a consequential liturgy there for Epiphany Sunday; (28) early Morning Prayer in remote Isle of Wight medieval gem of a building, where two clergy tell me with glee about those readings of the 14th inst. (see above).

**December:** (1) Marriage of aforesaid Pat Dearnley in re-vamped St. George's, Leeds – an astonishingly transformed interior, with rising balconies and boxes, which looks like a theatre as viewed from the dais – and is not without theatre in its liturgy, I guess; (3) Confirmation at South Tonbridge, and one elderly candidate with cancer is to be brought in a wheelchair solely for the confirmation itself, so I get a moment with him at the Peace and ask him if he would like me to bring communion to him in his home – and his face lights up and he says 'yes', so the vicar and I go round after the bunfights and have the simplest possible 'extension' of the communion to him and to his wife at home; in the evening I am in Reigate at a united service for Advent of an ecumenical group, where a good sign is that the numbers of the three churches truly mix and share during the coffee-time; (10) Bible Sunday in a vacant Dartford parish, where of course there is lighting of Advent candles just to ensure the *Promise* has not escaped me.