

## Prayers:

Heavenly Father, send your Holy Spirit on us this week to shape us and make us more like you. With the power of the rivers of living water which you promised to all believers, transform us by your Spirit.

We pray especially for:

**Sick:** Dawn Forey, Ruth Gillespie, Hanna Lebrato, Marion Mason and Sue Ralfe.

**RIP:** Ken Peters

Make us earnest in prayer, bold in faith and loving in service. Amen.

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The Parish Office is closed.

**Matthew and Jonny are continuing to say Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer in their homes every day. Join them [here](#).**

# St John's Church

## Alternative Pew Sheet

### 31st May 2020

## Welcome!

The Church of England continues to follow Government advice. Sadly it is not possible for services, baptisms, weddings and funerals in church to take place. We also have to keep the church closed.

This is the eleventh edition of our alternative pew sheet. We are committed to keeping in touch with everyone at St Johns and offer some resources: [here](#).

If you need any help or assistance from Matthew or Jonny, please be in touch (see opposite).

**Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,  
and let the one who believes in me drink.  
As the scripture has said,  
"Out of the believer's heart shall flow  
rivers of living water."  
John 7:37b-38**

## **ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST - MISSION STATEMENT**

Drawn together by Christ's love, we seek by his grace to live out his commandments to love the Lord our God with all of our being; and to love everyone we come across as we love ourselves.

**[www.stjohnschurchstanmore.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurchstanmore.org.uk)**

Please do check our website for future updates

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## The Feast of Pentecost

### **Collect**

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, ignite in us your holy fire; strengthen your children with the gift of faith, revive your Church with the breath of love, and renew the face of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Bible Readings** (click on links to access passages):

[Acts 2:1-21](#)

[John 7:37-39](#)

### **Short Sermon by Becky Stone**

The story of Pentecost focuses on wind and fire, but the Gospel for today is about water. All are symbols of the Spirit, and today I want to focus on water. The most obvious symbolism of water is that it quenches thirst, answering our need like a glass of clear cold water on a hot day. In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that anyone who is thirsty should come to him. He is of course talking about spiritual thirst: that longing we sometimes have for something more satisfying than material things, or even than the love of family and friends. Something which fills us deep inside, the way water satisfies us when we are thirsty.

When reflecting on the other uses of water, I found myself considering a humble washing up bowl! On it's own it is nothing: we call it a washing up bowl but in truth it doesn't clean anything! Putting dirty dishes in it while it is dry may be a step in the right direction, but unless we fill it with water nothing will really change. I think this is just like so many things we might do in an attempt to make ourselves better Christians. Resolving to read the Bible more, or pray more, or speak about our faith more, or put others first and love our neighbours, or any other worthy intention, is a bit like putting the dirty dishes in the washing up bowl: it's a step in the right direction, but without the power of the water it doesn't achieve its aim. Without the power of the Spirit each of those resolutions are unlikely to achieve their aim: reading the Bible risks being a chore, praying risks being

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formulaic or boring, speaking about our faith risks being forced and uncomfortable. But with the power of the Spirit in them, those resolutions may be transformative, for us, and for people around us.

I also found myself picturing a smooth, beautiful pebble as another powerful picture of what water can do. Such a pebble began life as part of a cliff. When it first broke off, it was jagged, sharp, rough, and gradually, over years and years, water has knocked off its jagged corners, rubbed down its sharp edges, and polished its roughness down to something which looks and feels perfect. If we allow the Spirit to work in our lives like water has worked on this pebble; if we invite Him in to our Bible reading, into our praying, into our efforts to share our faith and to think of others before ourselves, slowly but surely he will knock off our jagged corners, rub down our sharp edges, and polish our roughness.

It will be the work of a lifetime, just like the pebble was, but as Paul writes in Philippians 1:6 "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

So I encourage you today to invite the Spirit to work in your life. Ask the Lord to help you experience the river of living water promised to believers in the Gospel, to satisfy your spiritual thirst, and to see what transformation can begin! Amen.

