

St John's

Prayers:

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of our faith, and pray that we faithfully serve others who are in trouble, need, sickness or any other any kind of adversity.

We pray for your healing touch for those who are sick at home or in hospital, and for their carers:

Sick: Scott Bradley, Dawn Forey, Ruth Gillespie, Hanna Lebrato, Jack Mannix, Marion Mason and Sue Ralfe.

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Contacts

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The Parish Office is closed.

**Matthew and Jonny say
Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer each day
Join in [here](#).**

St John's Church

Pew Sheet

23rd August 2020

Welcome!

The Government has allowed places of worship to open for individual prayer and services.

St John's Church is open for prayer:
10.30am-12.30pm each day

St John's Church is open for services:
9.30am Sundays
10.30am Wednesdays

Our online services will continue for the time being.

**Jesus said,
'I tell you, you are Peter,
and on this rock I will build my church,
and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it'.
Matthew 16.18**

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

Please do check our website for future updates

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The Eleventh Sunday After Trinity

Collect

God of glory, the end of our searching, help us to lay aside all that prevents us from seeking your kingdom, and to give all that we have to gain the pearl beyond all price, through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bible Readings (click on links to access passages):

[Isaiah 51:1-6](#)

[Romans 12:1-8](#)

[Matthew 16:13-20](#)

Short Sermon by Lydia McLean, Licensed Lay Minister

Don't you just love Jesus! And especially when we hear him in this passage from Matthew's Gospel! Jesus asks the disciples who other people thought he was, and we hear Peter's faithful response, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' Jesus' response to Peter's question gives us an important insight about the message he gives in this passage. It's about the church as the gathered community worshipping Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Within that community, it is about relationship with each other in the worshipping community and in the world; where it all began and how the story continues.

Jesus calls Peter, then renames him 'Petros'; in Greek, a pebble. Jesus gives glory to God his Father in heaven for Peter's reply, showing that he and the Father work together in relationship.

Now Jesus jokes about different Greek words for rock to illustrate his message, 'And I tell you that you are Peter, (a pebble) and on this rock (Petra), I will build my church...' Petra means a massive rock, more like a mountain. This gives a picture of Peter and the disciples as small pebbles who have all been called, taught, commissioned and sent, being supported and grounded on the mountain-like rock which is Jesus. The Church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. Jesus Christ is the

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master builder who points to God. We do not build the Church on our own; we simply co-operate with the Master Builder.

Here at St John's, we are the gathered community of the church. For many decades, people worshipped in the old church of St Mary's down the road, then in the old brick church and finally in this church building dedicated to St John the Evangelist. However, the Church is more than buildings! We have seen this in the Covid-19 pandemic. Through prayerful planning, Christ is building his Church in new ways. We have been scattered, yet gathered remotely through YouTube, Zoom and online worship, enabling more people to worship and pray together than ever before and to connect with one another in community. In hospital chaplaincy, online worship is giving hope to patients who are bed bound. They have joined in prayer and worship in a way that has not previously been possible.

Jesus emphasised that the building of the Church was a certainty. No matter how much we are shaken by circumstances, pandemics or wars; Christ builds his Church. Therefore, no matter how oppressive and hopeless outward situations may appear, we as God's people belong to a cause that cannot fail.

When faithful believers study, are obedient to the Word, walk in the Spirit and produce the fruit of the Spirit, they can be sure they are living where Christ is building his Church. Christ builds his Church through faithful believers; his true Church is always 'under construction'.

Jesus illustrated today's message about building his Church by making a joke about Peter and rock. The rock is our Lord Jesus Christ as the cornerstone, and his Church is us and millions of other Christians; the community of people built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets from over 2,000 years ago. The story continues through our ministry as faithful Christians in the name of Jesus, because together we are the Church of Jesus Christ witnessing to a waiting and hungry world. Amen.