

St John's

Prayers:

Creator of the universe, may our lives and value be rooted in your abounding love for us that was displayed in Christ Jesus upon the cross. Help us to value others as you have valued us.

We pray for those who are unwell, especially:

Lolita Alvira, Scott Bradley, Dawn Forey, Ruth Gillespie, Siân Harries, Chris Lark, Hanna Lebrato, Marion Mason, Sue Ralfe and Finn.

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 27th September 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.

**I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.'**
Psalm 139:14

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 Sixteenth Sunday After Trinity

Collect

Lord of creation, whose glory is around and within us: open our eyes to your wonders, that we may serve you with reverence and know your peace at our lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible Readings (click on links to access passages):

[Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32](#)

[Philippians 2:1-13](#)

[Matthew 21:23-32](#)

Short Sermon from the Assistant Curate, Jonny Rapson

As I have approached my ordination to the priesthood, I have been reflecting on the task ahead and what it means to be a servant of Christ. It is a daunting prospect which led me to question: Am I good enough?

I wonder if any of you have ever had the same feeling of not being good enough? I suspect if any of you are like me, such thoughts are commonplace in daily life. It affects everyone in its own way, ultimately driven by a fear that what we believe about ourselves is how others see us too.

Often we can be told that we will be good enough, only when we feel good enough. But that is an upside-down way of looking at it. If we believe that something we can do, or some goal that we can attain, will rid us of that feeling of being inadequate, we will spend our lives searching for something that does not exist.

Why? Because you cannot find something you already have. We are, and have always been, good enough.

Our Gospel reading today shows the most pious religious leaders being told that those deemed unworthy by society will be going into the kingdom of heaven before them.

To explain it, Jesus tells the parable of the two sons. The father asks the first son to go into the vineyard and work, but the son refuses.

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However, despite his resistance at first, the first son goes into the vineyard and works. The father then approaches the second son and asks him to go into the vineyard. He responds that he will go, only to go back on his word and never goes to the vineyard. Jesus asks the scribes and the Pharisees, who has done the will of the father? They are forced to respond with the first son. In this story, the religious leaders of the day are like the son who said he will go but never did. Those deemed unpopular in society, are the ones who initially say no, but go to the vineyard in the end.

If you asked the question of the two groups: Who was viewed by the world as the ones who should feel objectively the best about themselves? Who were the most worthy? Who were the most righteous? You would likely say the religious leaders. Yet, those who are deemed unworthy by society, will be entering the kingdom of heaven before them.

In this reading, Jesus shows that he is not interested in how society views either group. Instead, Jesus sees both groups, for what they are. Not blinded by appearances and the opinions of others. Jesus reminds us that it does not matter one bit what the world thinks. Instead, we are defined and valued by God who is Father, Son & Holy Spirit. Faith is stronger than any preconceived earthly notion of what it means to be 'enough.'

The beauty of faith in Christ is that we are liberated from how the world views us and how we view ourselves. We are defined by Christ. No second opinion is needed. And it does not matter how well we know ourselves, God knows us better. His views are not marred by the world, he sees us clearly, in a way we cannot see ourselves.

So trust in God every day, that you are fearfully and wonderfully made. Ultimately being good enough is not defined by our mood or the opinions of others, which changes with the wind. It stands firm that we are deemed good enough by the creator of the universe. The cross is a reminder to us every day, that Christ was willing to sacrifice it all because of how much he values us, this day and always. No second opinion is ever needed. Amen.