

# St John's

## Prayers:

Dear Lord, we give you thanks for all saints who have died in the faith of Christ, for the hope of reunion with them in the world to come and for our communion with them now in your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Sick:** Lolita Alvira, Peggy Aris, Scott Bradley, Ruth Gillespie, Sian Harries, Susan Jones, Hanna Lebrato, Alex Michael, Sue Ralfe and Baby Parker

**RIP:** Jos Forbes and Mark Johnson.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

## Contacts

Rector	The Revd Matthew Stone	020 8954 3876
	Email: rector@stjohnschurchstanmore.org.uk	
Assistant Curate	The Revd Jonny Rapson	07557 808527
	Email: jonny.rapson@london.anglican.org	
Safeguarding Officers	Mark Lynch	07982 906833
	Louise Gregory	07504 527118
Children's Champion	Sue Wright	07958 499682
Adults at Risk Champion	Sheila Oliver	020 8954 4976
Churchwardens	Mark Lynch	07982 906833
	Jane Prentice	07976 388958
Deputy Wardens	Susan Jones	07864 846148
	Graham Nicholson	01923 226969
Treasurer	Jenny Neve	07989 378840
	Email: jenny.neve@gmail.com	
Data Protection Compliance	The Rector	020 8954 3876

The Parish Office is closed.

**Matthew and Jonny are continuing to say Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer at home. Join them [here](#).**

# St John's Church

## Pew Sheet

### 1st November 2020

## Welcome!

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

## Services

Sunday 9.30am - Parish Communion  
Wednesday 10.30am - Holy Communion

## Individual Prayer

10.30am-12.30pm Sundays and Wednesdays

Our [online services](#) will continue for the time being.

**'Blessed are those who mourn  
for they shall be comforted.'**  
Matthew 5:4

## **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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## All Saints' Day

### **Collect:**

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### **Readings:**

[Revelation 7:9-17](#)

[1 John 3:1-3](#)

[Matthew 5:1-12](#)

### **Short Sermon by Frances Westcott, Licensed Lay Minister**

What saints do we think of when we think of All Saints' Day? Perhaps we think of well-known saints, or ones that we find particularly helpful. Many people invoke the help of St Anthony when they have lost something – I have to admit, I have found him brilliant at finding things – or how about St Jude, the patron saint of lost causes? Other people call on Saint Christopher, the patron saint of travellers, asking for a safe journey. Other saints are revered for their goodness and holiness of life, such as St Francis or Saint Clare. All these saints are high-profile because they have been officially honoured by the Church. But even these saints were not always 'saintly' throughout their lives. Just think of St Augustine who led quite a dissolute life when he was young and famously asked God to give him chastity and continence 'but not yet'. St Jerome may have been an amazing scholar and translator of the Scriptures but, by all accounts, he was a bad-tempered old so-and-so – though he was kind to his cat! We may think that saints honoured by the church are all old men and women who lived long ago but that is not so. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church is in the process of conferring sainthood on a teenager, Carlo Acutis, who died of leukaemia earlier this year. He has achieved the first stage of sainthood, that of beatification.

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But not all saints are high profile and honoured by name. When Saint Paul wrote to the various churches he founded, he referred to the congregation as 'the saints' – for example, he speaks of 'the saints in Ephesus', 'the saints in Corinth'. For him, every church member is a saint. So we here, the gathered congregation of St John's Church, Stanmore are also saints by virtue of professing the Christian faith. We may not think of ourselves as saints - in fact, it is quite difficult to label ourselves as saints -but we are saints, not because of our virtues but because we are part of the community of Christ.

That all-important sense of community unites Christians. In the Apostle's Creed, we say that we believe in 'the communion of saints'. That communion of saints is the gathered community of those who have died in the faith of Christ, the Church Triumphant. Those still on earth are the Church Militant, fighting against sin. Those two communities will come together in solidarity and fellowship in the world to come. We heard in the reading from Revelation how, at the end time, all the saints will meet together in heaven, 'a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages.' At this time in the Church's year, before All Soul's Day and Remembrance Sunday, the belief in the Communion of Saints is very comforting.

The well-known hymn 'For all the Saints', which I know we would all love to be singing, provides a clear vision of the community of saints. We can't sing it in church, but let's look at the words more closely. The saints are 'a blest communion, fellowship divine'. The writer's prayer is that 'we, (God's) servants, faithful, true and bold', may 'strive for (God's) kingdom, as the saints of old, and win, with them, the glorious crown of gold.' There is no conflict between the saints on earth and those in heaven for 'all are one in thee, for all are thine.' The final verses, in which the writer envisages a coming together of all the saints both on earth and in heaven bring a wonderful sense of hope, echoing the words of Revelation: 'the saints triumphant rise in bright array'. Then, 'From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast, through gates of pearl streams in the countless host, singing to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Alleluia.' May we remember and rejoice in all saints, present, past and future and know that we, too, are numbered amongst them. Amen.