

St John's

Prayers:

Faithful God, thank you for all the gifts that you have blessed us with, help us to have confidence in the trust you have placed in us so that we may help and bring joy to others. Help us not to be ruled by fear, but let us put our faith in your love and grace.

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

RIP: Mark Johnson and Nicola Jones.

Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us.

Contacts

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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

15th November 2020

Lockdown 2

A new lockdown began on 5th November and included places of worship. Whilst the church building is closed until 2nd December, the church is very much alive and active.

A new online service will be available every Sunday.

Please contact Matthew or Jonny if you need any help or support.

**'Well done, good and trustworthy servant;
you have been trustworthy in a few things,
I will put you in charge of many things;
enter into the joy of your master.'**
Matthew 25:21

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 Second Sunday Before Advent

Collect:

Heavenly Lord, you long for the world's salvation: stir us from apathy, restrain us from excess and revive in us new hope that all creation will one day be healed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings:

[Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18](#)

[1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#)

[Matthew 25:14-30](#)

Short Sermon by the Assistant Curate, Jonny Rapson

The parable of the talents is certainly an interesting one - and it gives one clear message for all of us today. As I have reflected on this passage, I was reminded of the words of Ryan Kirby, lead singer of a band called Fit For A King, which I think summarise this parable perfectly:

'We all have two voices in our head, fear and love, the one you listen to will shape you, the one you ignore will fade away.'

In the parable of the talents, we have a wealthy man who is going on a journey and entrusts his servants with different sums of money. A talent, not to be confused with the English word 'talent', is a significant sum of money which was likely equal to 6,000 denarii, more money than many would have been entrusted with (the denarius was typically one day's wage for a labourer who worked six days each week).

The wealthy man gives five talents to one servant, two to another, and one to the final servant. We are told that each was given an amount according to their ability. The servants entrusted with five and two talents go out and trade to double the money for their master. However, the final servant, who was only entrusted with one talent, goes out and buries the talent in a field until the master returns.

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When the master returns he is thrilled that the first and second servant have doubled his investment and he says to them: 'enter into the joy of your master.' We are reminded here that this is not a parable about sound investment or making money. This parable ultimately has a spiritual dimension whereby those who are diligent with what they have been given are welcomed into the joy of their master.

However, the final servant, who had buried the talent, is scorned by his master for doing nothing with the money as there is no return on the investment, not even interest from a bank. We may feel sorry for this servant. He was afraid because he didn't want to lose the money he had been entrusted with. But he could have placed it in the bank with little risk. Instead, he let fear rule his decision making and simply buried the talent when there was a better option right in front of him.

We can see this as a parable that shows that God has entrusted us all with gifts. We all have gifts that God has given us which can help and bring joy to others. We cannot bury these gifts out of fear of what might happen. We might convince ourselves that there is a good reason why we give in to fear, maybe I'm not good enough? Maybe I'll make a mistake? Maybe I'll upset someone? But when we convince ourselves of these things, we become the servant who buried the talent in the ground, neglecting what God has given us. God has given us all gifts, and he has given them to us because we can use them. We are told in this parable that each servant was given what they could manage. Therefore, the presence of these gifts in your life is God telling you that you can do it.

Listen to the voice of God telling you that you are more than capable of using the gifts he has given you. Let that voice shape you. Ignore what fear has to say on the subject, it only leads us to bury what God has given us. Turn your back on fear, and let it fade away.

'We all have two voices in our head, fear and love, the one you listen to will shape you, the one you ignore will fade away.' Amen.