

St John's

Prayers:

Almighty God, who has poured out upon us the light of your incarnate Word, grant that the same light enkindled in our hearts may shine forth in our lives.

We pray for healing and wholeness for those who are **sick**: Peggy Aris, Scott Bradley, Susan Khazoom, Ruth Gillespie, Brenda Hunt, Susan Jones and Bridie O'Shea.

Also, those who have **died** recently, among them Trevor Loates. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Be with us, Lord, at this time, that we may be a people of hope.

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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

27th December 2020

Welcome!

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

Physical Services

Sunday 9.30am - Parish Communion
No Wednesday service

Online Service

Our weekly online service is available [here](#).

'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' (John 3:16 KJV)

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

St John's

Feast of St John the Evangelist

Collect:

Merciful Lord, cast your bright beams of light upon the Church: that, being enlightened by the teaching of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint John, we may so walk in the light of your truth that we may at last attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ your incarnate 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:

Exodus 33:7-11a

1 John 1

John 21:19b-25

Short Sermon from Frances Westcott, Licensed Lay Minister

Today we celebrate the day dedicated to our own St John the Evangelist. It rarely comes on a Sunday, so we are fortunate to be able to celebrate it in church today.

St John the Evangelist wrote the fourth gospel which is many people's favourite of the four gospels. It is in fact my favourite. I wonder if it is yours. We are not completely certain who this evangelist was, but it is most likely that he was one of Jesus' disciples, the brother of James, possibly the Beloved Disciple, and the disciple to whom Jesus entrusted the care of his mother Mary, when he was on the cross. Besides writing the 4th gospel, the evangelist also wrote a number of letters, part of which we heard today. These letters emphasise the importance of love in the Christian message.

Why is the Gospel of St John the Evangelist so loved? All the Gospels have something different to offer and all have important details not in other Gospels but perhaps the Gospel of St John offers a greater variety of unique treasures. The opening verses, known as the Prologue, are especially loved and read at Carol Services. Often people are asked to stand during the reading, emphasising its special nature. 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' St Luke gives an account of the birth of Jesus, emphasising his humanity; this account by St John, emphasises his divinity: 'The Word

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became flesh and dwelt among us.' This whole passage is one of the most beautiful and profound in all literature.

What else did St John include in his Gospel which did not appear elsewhere? There are the seven 'I am' sayings which shed light on Jesus's character and mission, in a metaphorical and thought-provoking way:

- I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to me shall not hunger.
- I am the Light of the World; he who follows me shall have the Light of Life.
- I am the Door; he who enters through me shall be saved. He shall go in and find pasture.
- I am the true Vine and my Father is the vine grower.
- I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.
- I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in me shall live, even if he dies.
- I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

What a lot we would miss if we didn't have these sayings to ponder on. All the sayings are profound and they come only in St' John's Gospel.

Stories only in St John include the Wedding at Cana, when Jesus turned the water into wine; the meeting with the Samaritan woman by a well when Jesus offered her living water and the account, at the Last Supper, when Jesus washes his disciples' feet. Perhaps the most dramatic story, again only in St John's Gospel, is the story of the Raising of Lazarus. How extraordinary it was when Jesus commanded Lazarus, who had been dead three days, 'Lazarus, come forth!' and Lazarus came out of the tomb, alive and well.

If you aren't familiar with the Letters of St John, I do recommend you to read them, particularly his first letter, as it tells us so clearly of God's love. The passage in the Gospel, though, which is probably the most famous and most loved, is John 3. 16. It sums up clearly and succinctly God's loving purposes for us all. I shall end by reminding you of it, on this special St John's day, in the words in which I learnt it at school: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' Amen.