

St John's

Prayers:

Gracious God, we thank you for the beauty of your creation and the blessings you have given us. As you have blessed us, help us to bless others through love and service.

We pray for those who need your love and power in their lives today: Merciditas Alvira, Ruth Gillespie, Bala Kompalli, Marion Mason and Chris Tatton-Brown.

We commend to God, all who have died recently, including those in armed conflict, natural disasters and those known to us, especially Maurice Fitchet, Anita Lindo and Farah Lungay. May they rest in peace and rise with Christ in Glory.

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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

19th September 2021

Services this week:

**9.30am Sunday - Parish Communion
(with Café St Jean in Church House)
10.30am Wednesday - BCP Holy Communion**

The online service for 9.30am on Sunday will be available [here](#).

**The church will be open for private prayer:
Sundays - Wednesdays (10.30am-4.30pm).**

'Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.'
Mark 9.35

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 God, defend your Church from all false teaching and give to your people knowledge of your truth, that we may enjoy eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings:

[Jeremiah 11:18-20](#)

[James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a](#)

[Mark 9:30-37](#)

Short Sermon from Jonny Rapson:

Let me begin by talking about the Peacock Mantis Shrimp. I was recently reading a book on what different animals tell us about our senses as humans. As I was reading, I couldn't help having a child-like wonder about this bizarre yet fascinating creature. In 1998, a Sea Life Centre in Great Yarmouth found itself quite literally in hot water when a Peacock Mantis Shrimp named Tyson, smashed through its glass aquarium shocking members of the public who watched in amazement. However, this isn't the only thing that makes these creatures unique. It is believed by scientists that the mantis shrimp has as many as 20 photoreceptors in its eyes in comparison with other animals that might only have three or four, including humans. The Guinness book of world records has crowned the Peacock Mantis Shrimp as the animal with the most complex eyesight.

Yet despite this complex eyesight, these shrimps have possibly the worst colour detection in the animal kingdom. There is still much to learn about how these shrimps see, but what we learn, is that our vision as humans enables us to see a world of beauty around us that is potentially unrivalled in God's created order.

In our gospel reading today - Christ says that "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he takes a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

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Whilst this passage reminds us of the importance of looking after the vulnerable, it also teaches us something about our attitude to life and God's creation. Whilst the child is indeed reliant on others, it also teaches a lot about the world around us. In our reading from James, we are challenged to '*Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.*'

Bitterness. Greed. Selfishness. Discrimination. Violence. Racism. Hatred. Anger. These are all learned behaviours that we gradually pick up from the world around us. The Child is not only an example of someone to be protected, but someone who sees a world in a way that we should aspire to. As a child who looks at a world without judgment, Christ does the same with the people he met.

'Whoever wants to be first must be last of all.' Humbling ourselves as Christ did through his birth and death, enables us to see life in a completely different way. A sense of awe and wonder at the amazing creation that God has blessed us with. Looking at the marvel of creatures around us like the Peacock Mantis Shrimp with its hefty punch and intricate eyesight. I wonder how much of our climate crisis and social inequality would be changed if the whole world had a child-like wonder at the beauty of God's creation. We lay aside all the prejudices that we have learned as the years have gone by. We are commanded to be servants of all, in order to be first. To be a servant of all is a radical call from Christ to lay aside everything, in service to others. It is to become child-like in our outlook of the world so that we may rely on God and see the world in a completely different way. Amen.