

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading *Ezekiel 18:1-4. 25-end*

The prophet tells the people that God's ways are righteous. They must take responsibility for their sins as individuals in the present time, rather than blaming previous generations.

Second Reading *Philippians 2:1-13*

The famous hymn speaks of how Christ gave up his divine power and glory, humbling himself to walk among human beings. Yet he remains the one to whom every knee will bend.

Gospel *Matthew 21:23-32*

The chief priests question Jesus' authority as he teaches in the Temple. His parable suggests that such critics are unworthy to be members of the kingdom of God.

FIRST READING Ezekiel 18.1–4, 25–32

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

- 1 The word of the LORD came to me:
- 2 What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'?
- 3 As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel.
- 4 Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.
- 25 Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is unfair.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?
- 26 When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die.

- 27 Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life.
- 28 Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die.
- 29 Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is unfair.' O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?
- 30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin.
- 31 Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?
- 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

SECOND READING Philippians 2.1–13

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

- 1 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy,
- 2 make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
- 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.
- 4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.
- 5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
- 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
- 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,
- 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

- 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,
- 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
- 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- 12 Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- 13 for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

GOSPEL Matthew 21.23–32

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

- 23 When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'
- 24 Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.
- 25 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?"'
- 26 But if we say, "Of human origin," we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.'
- 27 So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.
- 28 What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today."
- 29 He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went.
- 30 The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go.

³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

COLLECT

Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; 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.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For prayer

Remember in your prayers,, the members of the PCC and DCC following their "Away Day" yesterday when they considered our Mission Action Planning for the future of the parish.

Pray for all those who are known only to us who may be unwell, struggling with mental health or have financial worries.

Also remember in your prayers, all who work tirelessly in the background and without notice from within our congregation and wider church community to ensure that the many activities and support given to others continues.

Those who are acutely sick: Amy Bradbury, Claire Colman, Tim Fletcher, Vera Foster, Owen Goodwin, Roger Gray, Ricardo Hoyte, Jan Price, Joan Thornton, Carole Sharp, John Sharp, Peter Viccars, Lindsey Westcott, Debbie Whitehead, Jill Williams.

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Margaret Coles, Pat Elves, Jennifer Harbridge, Harry Henderson, Anna Johns, Vicky Johnston, Carol Muller, Roy Ray, Bob Whitehead, Jim Wild.

Those who have died: George Baumer, Maureen Joyce, John Steele.

DURING THE WEEK

MONDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer via Zoom
TUESDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Stephen's
WEDNESDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Stephen's
	9.45am	Coffee & Chat at St Stephen's
	10.30am	Tots & Teddies at St Julian's
	4.30pm	Organ Practice at St Stephen's
THURSDAY	All Day	Maintenance in the Hall area at St Stephen's
	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Julian's
	10.30am	Community Café open at St Julian's
	12noon	St Stephen's Church in use
FRIDAY	10.30am	Community Shed meets at St Stephen's
SATURDAY		



St Stephen
with St Julian

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

27 September 2026

Welcome to St Stephen's and St Julian's. Whoever you are, wherever you've come from, you are welcome! If this is your first visit, please do introduce yourselves to the clergy and stay for coffee after the service to meet others.

SERVICES TODAY

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Stephens President & Preacher: Sherine Angus
9.30am	Holy Communion at St Julian's President & Preacher: Sherine Angus
10.00am	Café Church at St Stephen's Officiant & Preacher: Charlie Hudson
2.30pm	Songs of Praise at Vesta Lodge

Next Sunday – Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Stephen's
9.30am	Harvest Festival Holy Communion at St Julian's
10.00am	Parish Communion at St Stephen's
2.30pm	Quiz afternoon at St Julian's
4.00pm	Harvest Festival "Bring and Share" Tea at St Julian's

Link for 10.00am Holy Communion service at St Julian's

<https://youtube.com/live/5KGUgpf-KQM?feature=share>

Link for Morning Prayer via Zoom link every **Monday**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84282425768?pwd=QaWZlPT4b5mV7a938AbNNYisZlYt3V.1>

Meeting ID: 842 8242 5768 Passcode: 792910