

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading *Isaiah 42:1-9*

The prophet's vision of the Messiah, who will bring justice to the nations.

Second Reading *Acts 10:34-43*

Peter's sermon to the Gentiles is the Christian story, from the preaching of John the Baptist to the resurrection and humankind's eventual judgement. Peter emphasises that God has no favourites.

Gospel *Matthew 3:13-end*

Jesus is baptised at the beginning of his ministry, is publicly endorsed by God and receives the Holy Spirit.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 42: 1 - 9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the LORD:

¹ Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶ I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸ I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.

⁹ See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

SECOND READING *Acts 10: 34 - 43*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

³⁴ Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius. 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality,

³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all.

³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree;

⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,

⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.

⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

GOSPEL *Matthew 3: 13 - end*

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

¹³ Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.

¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?'

¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented.

¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

COLLECT

Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted
children;
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 of all time and eternity,
you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father
in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:
by the power of your Spirit
complete the heavenly work of our rebirth
through the waters of the new creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Prayer:

Pray for all families who have been bereaved during the Christmas period. While others have celebrated the birth of Jesus, they have mourned the death of a loved one, pray that they may have drawn strength from family and friends around them.

Remember in your prayers, areas of the world where there is continued war and uncertainty of peace negotiations and a final outcome. Pray that these leaders may be guided appropriately by those who advise them and take time to think of their decisions and possible consequences.

As children and staff return to school or university, pray for those who find the process challenging but that they may relax when back into the required routine.

Pray for all who may be experiencing financial worries, the increased costs of heating their homes or fear that they will be unable to feed themselves or family.

Remember in your prayers all who help to ensure that church life runs as smoothly as possible, particularly our clergy, retired clergy and everyone with a specific role and the many who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

Take some time for a moment of personal prayer.

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

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Jackie Briggs, Margaret Coles, Dorothy Duncanson, Pat Elves, Harry Henderson, Anna Johns, Vicky Johnston, Carol Muller, Roy Ray, Julia Sherlock, Bob Whitehead, Jim Wild.

Those who have died: Nic Hayes, Roy Pitkin, Pam Smith.

DURING THE WEEK

MONDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer via Zoom
TUESDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Stephen's
	12noon	Funeral of t/l Pam Smith at West Herts Crematorium
	8.00pm	PCC Meeting
WEDNESDAY	9.15am	Holy Communion at St Stephen's
	10.30am	Tots & Teddies at St Julian's
	4.30pm	Organ Practice at St Stephen's
THURSDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Julian's
	11.30am	Funeral of t/l Nic Hayes at St Paul's Church
	12.15pm	Holy Communion at St Julian's
FRIDAY		
SATURDAY		



St Stephen
with St Julian

The Baptism of Christ

11 January 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: Charlie Hudson
10.00am	Parish Communion with at St Stephen's President: Sherine Angus Preacher: Michael Elves

Next Sunday – The Second Sunday after Epiphany

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Stephens
9.30am	Holy Communion at St Julian's
10.00am	Parish Communion at St Stephen's

Link for 10.00am service at St Stephen's Church
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cum54ts2vqA>

Link for Morning Prayer via Zoom link every ***Monday***
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8428425768?pwd=QaWzIPT4b5mV7a938AbNNYisZIYt3V1>

Meeting ID: 842 8242 5768
Passcode: 792910