

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading Isaiah 45:1-7

The time had come for God to end the exile of his people in Babylon. To do this he was raising up Cyrus, King of Persia, to crush the Babylonian Empire.

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul greets the Thessalonian church at the start of his letter by expressing thanksgiving for their faith and praising their endurance.

Gospel Matthew 22:15-22

Jesus' teaching implied that many of those originally invited to be part of God's kingdom would be found lacking. The Pharisees realised that this teaching was directed at them and they were furious.

FIRST READING Isaiah 45.1–7

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him – and the gates shall not be closed:

² I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me.

⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷ I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 1.1–10

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

¹ From Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers,

³ constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you,

⁵ because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake.

⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit,

⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

⁸ For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it.

⁹ For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God,

¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

GOSPEL Matthew 22.15–22

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

When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard the parables, they realized that Jesus was speaking about them.

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said.

¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, ‘Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.

¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?’

¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?

¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax.’ And they brought him a denarius.

²⁰ Then he said to them, ‘Whose head is this, and whose title?’

²¹ They answered, ‘The emperor’s.’ Then he said to them, ‘Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’

²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

COLLECT

God, the giver of life,
whose Holy Spirit wells up within your Church:
by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the gospel of Christ
and make us eager to do your will,
that we may share with the whole creation
the joys of eternal life;
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

God our Father,
whose Son, the light unfailing,
has come from heaven to deliver the world
from the darkness of ignorance:
let these holy mysteries open the eyes of our
understanding
that we may know the way of life,
and walk in it without stumbling;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For prayer

Pray for all areas of the world where there is conflict.
Remember in your prayers everyone who are involved
in negotiations hoping to resolve the ongoing issues.

Remember the people of Istanbul who have
experienced the highest amount of rainfall in the past
84 years. Pray all for countries that are affected by the
El Niño weather phenomenon and are worried as they
wonder how it will affect them in the coming months.

Pray for all those known to us who are very unwell or
recently bereaved. Hope that they find comfort from
their families and friends and the wider community.
Pray for all who work in the emergency services and
the valuable support they give to the extended family
during a crisis.

Those who are acutely sick: Amy Bradbury, Claire
Colman, Tim Fletcher, Vera Foster, Owen Goodwin,
Roger Gray, Joy Groves, 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:

DURING THE WEEK

MONDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer via Zoom
	11.00am	Service at Vesta Lodge
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	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Julian's
	9.30am –	Quiet Day for retired
	4.30pm	clergy at St Stephen's
	10.30am	Community Café open at St Julian's
	12noon	Quiet Day Eucharist at St Stephen's
FRIDAY	10.30am	Community Shed meets at St Stephen's
SATURDAY	9.00am	Men's Breakfast at St Stephen's

Link for Morning Prayer via Zoom link every **Monday**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84282425768?pwd=QaWzIPT4b5mV7a938AbNNYisZIYt3V.1>
Meeting ID: 842 8242 5768 Passcode: 792910

*The pulpit pedestal in St Stephen's is arranged
in memory of
Cliff Hawkes*



St Stephen
with St Julian

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

18 October 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: Sherine Angus Preacher: Charlie Hudson
9.30am	Holy Communion at St Julian's President & Preacher: Charlie Hudson
10.00am	Parish Communion at St Stephen's President & Preacher: Sherine Angus Deacon: Michael Elves
12noon	Burial of Ashes t/l Frederick Milton
12noon	Parish Walk around Bricket Wood Common

Next Sunday – Last Sunday after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Stephen's
9.30am	Holy Communion at St Julian's
10.00am	Café Church at St Stephen's
12noon	Burial of Ashes t/l Doreen Swain
2.30pm	Songs of Praise at Vesta Lodge

Link for 10.00am Parish Communion service at
St Stephen's
<https://youtube.com/live/-yzCIC2T5PM?feature=share>