

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading *Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 8 - 12*

Having rebuilt Jerusalem's walls, Nehemiah calls on Ezra to read the books of the Law to the assembled people, so that they may understand what God requires of them.

Second Reading *Colossians 3:12-17*

Paul encourages the Colossians to behave to one another in ways that reflect the love and compassion of God, filled with the word of Christ.

Gospel *Matthew 24:30-35*

Jesus speaks of the signs of the approaching end time, reassuring his listeners that his words will remain when all else passes away.

FIRST READING Nehemiah 8. 1 -4a, 8 -12

¹ All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel.

² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month.

³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

⁴ The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose;

⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people

wept when they heard the words of the law.

¹⁰ Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'

¹¹ So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.'

¹² And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing,

SECOND READING Colossians 3. 12-17

¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

GOSPEL Matthew 24. 30-35

Jesus said to his disciples:

³⁰ 'The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory.

³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds,

from one end of heaven to the other.

³² From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

COLLECT

Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
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 of all grace,
your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry
with the bread of his life
and the word of his kingdom:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness
sustain us by your true and living bread;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**

For prayer

As the 60th anniversary of the Aberfan disaster was commemorated this week, pray for all the children and adults who lost their lives on that day. The families, emergency workers and other folk from the local community who helped in the rescue and recovery and for all in the village today who continue to hold their memories very close.

As the schools break up for half term, pray for the teachers as they take time to rest and recharge. Pray for all families who find this time difficult with the need to provide additional food during the day and to avoid pressure from the expectation of the provision of activities.

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: Steve Bishop, 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	<i>No</i> Morning Prayer via Zoom
TUESDAY	9.15am	<i>No</i> 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	<i>No</i> Tots & Teddies at St Julian's
	4.30pm	Organ Practice at St Stephen's
THURSDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer at St Julian's
	10.30am	Community Café open at St Julian's
FRIDAY	10.30am	Community Shed meets at St Stephen's
	10.30am	Holy Communion at Fonthill House
SATURDAY	10.30am	All Souls Service 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



St Stephen
with St Julian

Bible Sunday 25 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 & Preacher: Charlie Hudson
9.30am	Holy Communion at St Julian's President & Preacher: Geoff Lackey
10.00am	Café Church at St Stephen's Leaders: Sherine Angus & Charlie Hudson
12noon	Burial of Ashes t/l Doreen Swain
2.30pm	Songs of Praise at Vesta Lodge

Next Sunday – All Saints Day

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

Link for 9.30am Holy Communion service at St Julian's
<https://youtube.com/live/q5rhutnIhvk?feature=share>