TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading: Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18
For those who sinned against the Lord, the day of his judgement would be like a battle so terrifying that even a seasoned warrior would cry in fear.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
But God has intervened in Jesus Christ and opened a path to salvation from his just wrath. Faith in Christ and the love of God will prepare us for judgement, whenever it may come.

Gospel Matthew 25: 14-30
God has given to each of us abilities and responsibilities, to use in his service. If we trust in his loving purpose, our reward will be the joy of his presence.

FIRST READING Zephaniah 1. 7, 12–18

7 Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the
LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.
12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I
will punish the people who rest complacently on their
dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD
will not do good, nor will he do harm.'
13 Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid
waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit
them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink
wine from them.
14 The great day of the LORD is near, near and
hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is
bitter, the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and
anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of
darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick
darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the
fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.
17 I will bring such distress upon people that they shall
walk like the blind; because they have sinned against
the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save
them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his
passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a
terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the
earth.

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 5. 1–11

1 Concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and
sisters, you do not need to have anything written to
you.
2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of the
Lord will come like a thief in the night.
3 When they say, 'There is peace and security,' then
sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour
pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be
no escape!
4 But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to
surprise you like a thief;
5 for you are all children of light and children of the
day; we are not of the night or of darkness.
6 So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us
keep awake and be sober;
7 for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are
drunk get drunk at night.
8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and
put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a
helmet the hope of salvation.
9 For God has destined us not for wrath but for
obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or
asleep we may live with him.
11 Therefore encourage one another and build up each
other, as indeed you are doing.

GOSPEL Matthew 25. 14–30

Jesus said to his disciples,
14 'The kingdom of heaven is as if a man, going on a
journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his
property to them;
15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another
one, to each according to his ability. Then he went
away.
16 The one who had received the five talents went off at
once and traded with hem, and made five more talents.
17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents
made two more talents.
18 But the one who had received the one talent went
off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's
money.
19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and
settled accounts with them.
20 Then the one who had received the five talents came
forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master,
you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made
five more talents."
21 His master said to him, "Well done, good and
trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few
things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter
into the joy of your master."
22 And the one with the two talents also came forward,
saying, "Master, you handed
over to me two talents; see, I have made two more
talents."
23 His master said to him, "Well done, good and
trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few
things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter
into the joy of your master."
24 Then the one who had received the one talent also
came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a
harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and
gathering where you did not scatter seed;
25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the
ground. Here you have what is yours."
26 But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave!
You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and
gather where I did not scatter?
27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the
bankers, and on my return I would have received what
was my own with interest.

28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one
with the ten talents.
29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and
they will have an abundance; but from those who have
nothing, even what they have will be taken away.
30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer
darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of
teeth.'"

COLLECT

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the
children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we,
having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and great glory we
may be made like him in his eternal and glorious
kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope: bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

For prayer:

Remember in your prayers, all areas of the world where there is continued conflict – Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, Israel, Iran and others not so widely reported. Where there have been changes in the administration of a country, pray that the new regime may continue to seek a solution through negotiations, rather than fighting.

Pray for all who are attending the COP31 conference – may they listen to each other and recognise the need for action to achieve a common goal.

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, 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: Pat Dixon, Philip Rea, Carole Sharp, John Sharp.

DURING THE WEEK

MONDAY	9.15am	Morning Prayer via Zoom
	11.00am	Funeral of t/l Pat Dixon at St Stephen's
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
	10.30am	Community Café open at St Julian's
	During the day	Organ tuning at St Stephen's
FRIDAY	10.30am	Community Shed meets at St Stephen's
SATURDAY	11.00am	Burial of Ashes t/l James Archibald

St Stephen
with St Julian

Second Sunday before Advent

15 November 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: Geoff Lackey
10.00am	Parish Communion at St Stephen's President & Preacher: Sherine Angus
2.15pm	Young@Herts Bell ringers at St Stephen's

Next Sunday – Christ the King

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 10.00am Parish Communion service at St Stephen's
https://youtube.com/live/074PsVsa7-o?feature=share

Link for Morning Prayer via Zoom link every **Monday**
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84282425768?pwd=QaWzIPT4b5mV7a938AbNNYisZlYt3V.1
Meeting ID: 842 8242 5768 Passcode: 792910