

The Beneficial

November and December 2025

News from the Benefice of St Mary's + St Stephen's

Seasonal Verse

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" **Luke 2, 8-13**

Wow, and don't we need some good news! Cue the simplistic Christian response: 'Yes! And that's what Jesus is all about!' And my response is, 'yes, well, he is, but ...' Our new Archbishop Sarah said shortly after her election that she would approach the role in the same way as the amazing Rowan Williams - with Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other. (She didn't say which one! Haha.) We need them both to give our good news credence. The light which the darkness will not overcome has indeed come, and we celebrate that with all our hearts. But in bringing that hope and joy we cannot be smiley, happy people as we're always carrying an awareness of that darkness. That's why Advent is such an important season - a preparation, a holding and waiting. As the Taizé chant says, 'Within our darkest night you kindle a flame that never dies away', so we face the darkness and see the light coming even more brightly - and our message joy deepens and becomes credible.

ESPECIALLY for the year's end! Mark your diaries NOW!

SCRUFFY CHURCH - a fun, family gathering on the 4th Sunday, 23rd November at 4pm SS

COOL FUN & FAITH - a youth group for secondary school teens, at Stephen's every term time 1st & 3rd Sunday, 7 – 8.30 pm: 16/11 and 7/12.

ST STEPHEN'S WORSHIP IN THE ROUND Sunday 23 November – 10.45am

This is St Stephen's relaxed non-communion service on the 4th Sunday each month. Come early for coffee and pastries before the service from 10am, and afterwards for a catch up.

REFLECTIVE CELTIC SERVICE FOR ADVENT Sunday 30 November 4 pm at St Stephen's - A quiet doorway into the season.

LGBTQ+ AFFIRMING CAROL SERVICE Sunday 14 December 5pm at Christchurch, Julian Road

SCRUFFY NATIVITY Sunday 21 December 4pm at St Stephen's Centre

HEADS UP ON WHAT'S HAPPENING

Friday 5 December – Lansdown Friendship Club

A welcoming gathering for people with memory difficulties, their accompanying family and friends. Enjoy refreshments and a monthly theme at St Stephen's Church Centre 2-3.30pm.

Thursday 11 December – Lansdown Neighbourhood Group

Meet friends old and new at this monthly coffee gathering at St Stephen's Church Centre, 10.30 am – noon.

Friday 21 November, 7pm at St Stephen's: Mary Berry, A Slice of Life: **SOLD OUT**

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL EVENTS

Saturday 22 November 7.30pm at St Stephen's: Bath Cantata Group & Handel's Messiah

Saturday 29 November 10.30 am – 12.30pm at St Stephen's: MU Christmas Fair with coffee, cakes, stall and a raffle. Perfect for early seasonal treats!

Saturday 6 December 7.30 pm at St Stephen's: Bath CitySound Voices 'Christmas Magic'



BATH CANTATA GROUP
Saturday 22 November 2025, 7pm
St Stephen's Church, Lansdown BA1 5SX

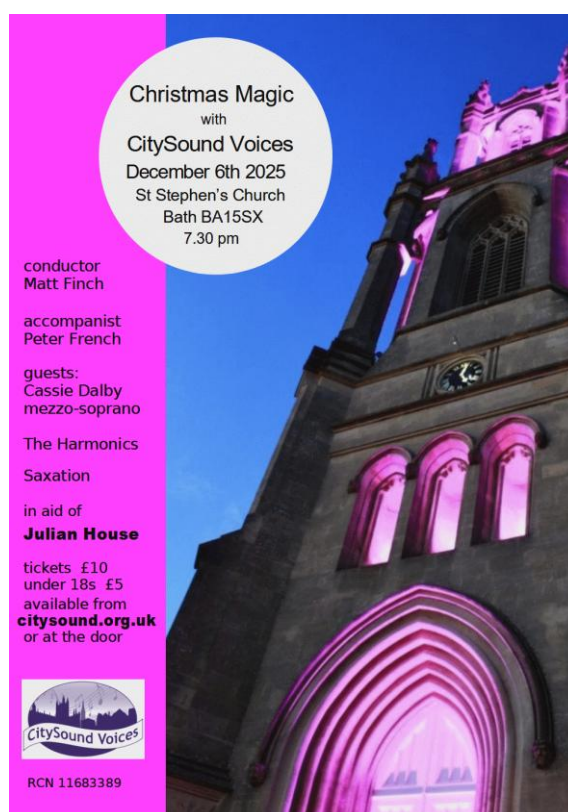
Handel
Messiah

A Sacred ORATORIO
IN SCORE
Composed in the Year 1734
G.F. HANDEL

Neil Moore *music director*

Tickets £25, Students £10 U18s free
Available from www.bathcantatagroup.co.uk
Bath Box Office (01225 463362) and on the door
www.bathcantatagroup.co.uk | Charity number 292728

BATH BOX OFFICE



Christmas Magic
with
CitySound Voices
December 6th 2025
St Stephen's Church
Bath BA15SX
7.30 pm

conductor
Matt Finch

accompanist
Peter French

guests:
Cassie Dalby
mezzo-soprano

The Harmonics
Saxation

in aid of
Julian House

tickets £10
under 18s £5
available from
citysound.org.uk
or at the door


RCN 11683389

A 2026 DIARY DATE: Saturday 24 January, 3.00pm. Talk with tea: Rev Philip Hawthorn – "From Watford to Bath – a life in the media, literature and the church". A joint St Mary's and St Stephen's Beacon of Lansdown fundraising event in St Stephen's Centre. Tickets: £15 **Keep in touch!** Follow St Stephen's on Facebook and Instagram @thebeaconoflansdown.

DON'T FORGET . . .

Parent & Toddlers St Stephen's Church Centre, Monday (during termtime) 9.30 – 11.15 am

Service Rotas and Youth helpers Volunteering is great for well-being! Helpers are always needed at both Benefice churches. It's fun and a lovely way of joining our church families. Do get in touch to find out how you can get involved. [Office](#)

Music Bell ringers and choir members would be very welcome at St Stephen's. Interested? Please contact the [Parish Office](#).

St Stephen's Centre A great place to hire for parties, meetings, community gatherings. Book via the [Office](#)

Giving Our need for everyone's financial support is greater than ever. We cannot say how hugely appreciative we are for any kind and generous giving of whatever nature. To find out more, please contact our Treasurers: St Stephen's [Mike King](#) | St Mary [Judith Pepler](#)

Friends of St Mary's Charlcombe welcomes new members to support and cherish Bath's oldest church still in use. Watch St Mary's website for 2025 Friends' events.

Saturday Police Beat with PCSO Ray: 13 December, 10am – Noon in St Stephen's Foyer.

SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE – NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Hangout, a themed activity time for children, operates every Sunday at St Stephen's.

NOVEMBER

Sunday 16th

21st Sunday after Trinity

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Choral Communion + Hangout

SS 7 – 8.30 pm Cool Fun and Faith Youth Group

Sunday 23rd

Christ the King

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Worship in the Round + Hangout

SS 4 pm Scruffy Church family friendly service

Sunday 30th

Advent Sunday

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Holy Communion + Hangout

SS 4 pm Reflective Celtic Service for Advent

DECEMBER

Sunday 7th

2nd Sunday of Advent

SM 9 am Eucharist (BYO Coffee)

SS 10.45 am Choral Communion + Hangout

SS 3 pm Clarkson's Commemorative Carols

SS 7 – 8.30 pm Cool Fun and Faith Youth Group

Sunday 14th

3rd Sunday of Advent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Holy Communion + Hangout

Sunday 21st

4th Sunday of Advent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Holy Communion in the Round + Hangout

SS 4 pm Scruffy Nativity in St Stephen's Centre

SM 4 pm Carols by Candlelight

SS 6.30 pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols with mince pies and mulled wine afterwards

Wednesday 24th	Christmas Eve
	SS 5 pm Christingle Service
	SS 11.30 pm Benefice Midnight Mass
Thursday 25th	Christmas Day
	SM & SS 10 am Family Christmas Communion
Sunday 28th	1st Sunday of Christmas
	SM 9 am Eucharist
	SS 10.45 am Holy Communion

PRAYER IN THE BENEFICE

Monday We gather on Zoom for prayer at 8.30 – 9.00 am. Please email to receive the code.

Thursday Meditation in the Christian Tradition - 6.30pm-7ish St Mary's, Charlcombe. A guiding thought, then 20 minutes of silence. Blankets and cushions provided.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rector: Revd Philip Hawthorn

Associate Priest: Revd Debbie Pow

To email each by name: Philip/Debbie@ststephensbath.org.uk

For general information, or giving to our churches, please contact our Administrator:

Gabriela Longhurst - Church Office, Lansdown Road, Bath BA1 5SX

T: 01225 420946 e: office@ststephensbath.org.uk

Churchwardens, all contactable via the office:

St Stephen's: Carolyn Cowley, Penny Cracknell, Hester Davies

St Mary's: Gordon Cooke

Treasurers: Mike King (SS) and Judith Pepler (SM)

www.ststephensbath.org.uk

www.stmaryscharlcombe.org.uk

Home Communion If anyone is unable to come to church on a Sunday and would value home communion, please contact the [Parish Office](#).