



# Weekly News

26<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Stephen, First Martyr (*Boxing Day*)

[www.stpetersharrogate.org.uk](http://www.stpetersharrogate.org.uk)

St Peter's Church, Cambridge Road, Harrogate, HG1 1PB

## On the feast of Stephen



People whose birthdays fall near Christmas often feel their day gets overshadowed by the holiday. The same might be said of Stephen, whose day is celebrated on 26<sup>th</sup> December. The most common mention of the saint's day is in a Christmas carol that's not even about him, but about another saint, Good King Wenceslas, who went out and helped the poor, '*on the feast of Stephen*'.

As it turns out, performing acts of charity is an apt way to celebrate the feast of Stephen, who was chosen by members of the early Christian Church to minister to widows and the poor. Stephen was one of seven men, '*deeply spiritual and prudent*,' selected to be the first deacons of the Church in Jerusalem. In addition to this ministry, Stephen performed great signs and wonders in Jesus' name.

The Acts of the Apostles calls him '*a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit*'. However, while Stephen preached eloquently about Jesus and the Kingdom of God, not everyone in the community agreed with him. Some of the temple leaders plotted against him, accusing him of blasphemy. They encouraged others to give false witness before the Sanhedrin about what Stephen had said and done. Stephen's response to these accusations (Acts 7 v 1 - 53) made them even angrier, and when Stephen looked up to the sky and exclaimed that he saw Jesus standing at God's right hand, they were enraged. He was dragged out of the city and stoned to death—making Stephen the first Christian martyr. The account in Acts has many parallels with the trial and death of Jesus Christ. As Stephen was stoned, he prayed, '*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*.' As he died, Stephen said, '*Lord do not hold this sin against them*.'

When Good King Wenceslas took food and firewood to the poor man who lived in the woods beyond his castle, he was celebrating '*the feast of Stephen*' in a way that the saint would probably have approved of — by taking care of the poor.

# Today's Services: 26<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Stephen, First Martyr

*Boxing Day*

**9:30 Holy Communion (BCP)**

*There is **no** Sunday Club for school age children today*

**Readings** Acts 7 v 51 to end  
Matthew 10 v 17 - 22

**Preacher:** Alan Garrow

**Our Duty Warden today is:  
Sian Lockwood**

## Please join us to bring in the New Year

On Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December, New Year's Eve, we are holding two special services. **Pray for 2022** - come and light a candle and pray for our nation and for the world, from 4:00 – 6:00 pm. Then later our atmospheric, candlelit **Watchnight Service** starts at 11:30 pm.



This week we are continuing to live stream Morning and Evening Prayer at 8:00 am and 5:00 pm from Monday to Saturday on Facebook and Zoom. To join in follow the [links](#) on our website.



## At the heart of Christmas

Download the app for daily  
*At the Heart of Christmas*  
reflections  
from Christmas Eve  
to 6<sup>th</sup> January  
[www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org)



## Christmas Stamp appeal

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**Please pray for those who have asked for our prayers:**

Pat Anderson, Ruth Bowes, Graham Cornish, Geni Emrullahu, Louise Emrullahu, Pam Gardiner, Vicky Harrison, June Hemmings, Miriam Jones, Jackie Kelly, Charlie Martineau and Sheila Pantin.

**Also in our prayers this week:**

- Mon** Western Primary School  
Sanctuary, St Peter's Youth Group
- Tues** Our retired Clergy: Sue Pearce, Michael Hunter, Graham Cornish  
The team preparing hot meals during the week at St Peter's
- Wed** Delivery drivers and postal workers  
Local retail and leisure businesses
- Thurs** The national campaign aiming to offer booster jabs to all eligible adults by the end of December  
The volunteer vaccinators and stewards working tirelessly at vaccine clinics and mobile units
- Fri** The Secretary for Health, Sajid Javid  
Patients in hospital with the Omicron variant
- Sat** Hannah Beck, Lay Reader  
St Peter's Bellringers

**Daily Readings**

*Morning Prayer is at 8:00 am and Evening Prayer at 5:00 pm daily. These are the Bible readings we will be using in Church each morning this week. Why not read them at home if you are unable to come to the service?*

- Mon** *John, Apostle and Evangelist*  
Psalm 21  
Exodus 33 v 12 to end  
1 John 2 v 1 - 11
- Tues** *The Holy Innocents*  
Psalm 36  
Genesis 37 v 13 - 20  
Matthew 18 v 1 - 10
- Wed** *Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170*  
Psalm 19  
Jonah 1  
Colossians 1 v 1 - 14
- Thurs** Psalm 113  
Jonah 2  
Colossians 1 v 15 - 23
- Fri** Psalm 102  
Jonah 3 and 4  
Colossians 1 v 24 – 2 v 7
- Sat** *The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus*  
Psalm 103  
Genesis 17 v 1 - 13  
Romans 2 v 17 to end

**The Collect for Saint Stephen's Day**

(Book of Common Prayer)

Grant, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth, for the testimony of thy truth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and, being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors by the example of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate.

## What's on This Week:

*St Peter's Church is open for private prayer from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm every day except Sundays*

- Mon 27<sup>th</sup>** *Substitute Holiday for Christmas Day*
- Tues 28<sup>th</sup>** *Substitute Holiday for Boxing Day*  
**12:00 pm Healing Service**
- Wed 29<sup>th</sup>** 10:30 am Café RefleXions
- Thurs 30<sup>th</sup>** **11:00 am Holy Communion**  
**NO** Choir Practice
- Fri 31<sup>st</sup>** ***New Year's Eve***  
**4:00 - 6:00 pm Pray for 2022:** light a candle and pray for our nation  
**11:30 Watchnight Service**
- Sat 1<sup>st</sup>** ***New Year's Day***
- Sun 2<sup>nd</sup>** **The Epiphany**  
8:30 Holy Communion  
9:30 Family Communion  
11:00 Choral Matins  
1:00 Sunday Lunch  
4:15 Stepping Stones Service – *Celtic Worship*  
6:30 Choral Evensong

The Breakfast Club provides a **free, hot breakfast** from Monday to Saturday (8:20 – 8:45 am) for all those who are hungry or in need.  
A hot **Sunday Lunch** is served from 1:00 – 1:30 pm.  
This week **hot food** is available 4:30 – 4:50 pm on Monday and Wednesday in Church and on New Year's Eve from the West Door as takeaway.  
**Our mini Supermarket** is on Thursdays 4:30 – 4:50 pm.

## Next Week's Deadline

The deadline for the next full edition of the Weekly News (2<sup>nd</sup> January) will be noon on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> December. Please send any items (including photos) to Alan Garrow **or** to Marian Chambers (addresses below).

## Key Contacts

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