**** St. Mary the Virgin, Baldock.**
**St. Margaret of Antioch, Bygrave.**

*“BUILDING WITH CHRIST”*

The Feast of Stephen!!

Worship on Sunday 26th December 2021

**FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT DIRECTION: YOU ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A MASK UNLESS YOU ARE EXEMPT.**

**8am****Communion (traditional words)**

*A simple peaceful start to the day! The service will takes place at the High Altar.*

**9.30am****Parish Communion**

Carols, communion and plenty of opportunities to think about the meaning of Christmas! *We have designated the south aisle for those who wish to be cautious.*

WE ARE NOT STREAMING WORSHIP TODAY.

**11.00am****Parish Communion at Bygrave**

Join us for Christmas Communion in a village setting.

*Morning and Evening prayer are said nearly every day in church.
See Week at a Glance for details and times.*

*Evening Prayer is Zoomed on the days in Week at a Glance (use the link below).*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81188370718?pwd=MVVDelNMbEppRldBYnFpN0NwT1hhQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 8837 0718 Passcode: 188423

*You are warmly invited to join the group of people who find this a valuable anchor for the day.*



**Next Sunday’s worship** 2nd January 2022

*7.20am Morning Prayer*8.00am Holy Communion (traditional words)

**10.00am** Messy Communion for All Ages for Epiphany
*followed (we hope) by bacon butties*

**Prayers and readings for this Sunday**

**Hymns:**

242 Good King Wenceslas
240 Good Christians all rejoice
36 Angels from the realms of glory
486 Of the Father’s heart begotten
700 Unto us a boy is born

**The Collect**

Gracious Father,
who gave the first martyr Stephen
grace to pray for those who took up stones against him:
grant that in all our sufferings for the truth
we may learn to love even our enemies
and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt,
looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us,
Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

**The New Testament Reading Acts 7:51-end**

Stephen said to the high priest and the council: 51 ‘You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are for ever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. 52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. 53 You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.’

54 When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. 55 Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ 57 But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. 58 Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ 60 Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he died.

**The Gospel Matthew 10:17-22**

Jesus summoned the twelve and sent them out with the following instruction: 17‘Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; 18and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. 19When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; 20for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 22and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

This week, please remember in your prayers these areas of our parish:

Aldridge Court, Jackson Street, Orchard Road, Meeting House Lane, Mulberry Court, Vintage Court.

Those in need of healing:

Paula Conder, Penny and Douglas Mitchell, Peter Harris, Oliver Britton, Martin Reed, David Dane, Alan Russell, Martyn Gray, Tracy Copping, Karen Kynman, Shaun Trussell, Jeanette Jackson, Sheila Wadsworth, Timothy Growns, Stuart Hodges, Peter Goodchild.

Those who have died recently:
Ron Millett, Tony Thompson

Those whose anniversary of death is remembered this week

Phyllis Leahy, Jake Chapman, John Newman, Ivan Grimwade, Florrie Rogers, Hettie Darts, Jean Mitchell, Rose Bunker.

**Post Communion**

Merciful Lord,
we thank you for the signs of your mercy
revealed in birth and death:
save us by the coming of your Son,
and give us joy in honouring Stephen,
first martyr of the new Israel;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

Andrew and Helen would like to wish everyone a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a New Year full of Christian hope. We are extremely grateful for all the love and support you have shown over the last year. In January we have to take several weeks off supporting family members and once again are very grateful to many of you for enabling this to happen.

**Tiny Tots!!**

Tiny Tots runs in church on Wednesdays at 10.30am. Do join us for Christian growth for pre-schoolers and companionship for adults!! 

**Messy Church** in **January** will be a **Messy Communion Service** and will take place **at the earlier time of 10am.** Join us in church with the rest of the congregation for what will be very much an all age service with lots of craft and activities and lots of time to worship together as the whole Church family. We’ll finish with sharing bread and wine or a blessing together (and then we’ll have bacon butties!)

**Planned Giving:** Thank you so much to everyone who has responded to the planned giving campaign. I’m delighted to say we have so far received increased pledges totalling a little over £220 per month. This is really encouraging considering the large increase in giving we were blessed with last year. However when reductions in giving are taken into account (due to people dying or moving away) much of this is used to make up the difference **Please send your response in as soon as possible if you have not already done so (even if there is no change) as it enables us to remove so much uncertainty in our budgeting.**

**Festival thanks:** It looks as if the Tree Festival raised in the region of £2,000 - a really wonderful result. Thanks so much to everyone who worked so hard to make it happen.

**Advance notice**

Bishop Michael is coming to celebrate communion at St Mary’s on Sunday 9th January at 9.30am.

**Eco Tip Christmas 1:** Keep hope alive , not just in getting closer to Jesus but in reading uplifting eco news on eco charity pages eg World Wildlife Fund

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/success-stories/what-we-have-achieved-so-far-2021>

**Hidden Humour**

What did one snowman say to the other?

“Is it just me, or do you smell carrots?”

**Peal of Bells**

There will be a full peal of bells on December 27th starting at 10am.

**MISSION 2022 - FAITH AND CLIMATE**

Around the Baldock Festival next year we hope each one of us will invite a friend or neighbour or a member of our family to an evening where we will hear how people’s Christian faith has influenced their views and the way they live their life combatting climate change. Who are you hoping to invite? Please start praying now!

Each evening will include a short talk, some questions and answers and some fringe events, to do with living sustainably. We hope to be providing light refreshments.

In the new year we will be inviting you to prepare by considering four questions:

1. How did you become a Christian?
2. Does the bible have anything to say about climate change?
3. What would you say if a friend asked you how your faith affects your views about climate change?
4. Who are you going to invite to the evenings?

So far we have three evenings planned:

* Phil Evans will be coming on Tuesday 26th April to speak about the vital work Christian Aid is doing to combat climate change and why he is part of it.
* John Cherry, local Christian farmer is coming on Wednesday 11th May to speak about the major festival he runs each year in Weston, called Groundswell which focusses on sustainable farming.
* On Ascension Day (Thursday May 26th) as part of our Communion Service we will be thinking about different views of what the bible says about Climate Change and God’s involvement with his wounded world. This is also Andrew’s 60th birthday so he hopes you will come and celebrate with him as well (possibly with something fizzy!)

What to do now:

* Pray about who you might invite to an evening
* Think about your answers to the questions above

The earth is the Lord’s and all that fills it.

*Psalm 24 verse 1*

**WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE**

SUNDAY 26th  *Boxing Day St Stephen / 1stSunday of Christmas*

 7.20am Morning Prayer in church
8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Parish Communion

 11.00am Communion at Bygrave

Mon 27th *John, Apostle and Evangelist*

 10.00am – 1.00pm Full peal of bells for Christmas

8.00pm Monday Home Group on Zoom (contact Emma)

Tues 28th *The Holy Innocents*

Wed 29th *Stephen, deacon, first martyr*

 8.40am Morning Prayer in church

9.30am Holy Communion 10.30am Tiny Tots

4.45pm Evening Prayer on Zoom
5.00pm Evening Prayer in church

Thu 30th 8.40am Morning Prayer in church
5.00pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

JANUARY 2022

Sat 1st *Naming and Circumcision of Jesus*

 9.30am Morning Prayer in church

 5.00pm Evening Prayer in church

SUNDAY 2nd *2nd Sunday of Christmas* 7.20am Morning Prayer in church
8.00am Holy Communion
**10.00am** Messy Communion for All Ages

 6.00pm Evening Prayer in church

‘I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’

**Rector:** Rev’d Canon Andrew Holford: 01462 896273 2008luddite@gmail.com

**Lay Minister:** Katrina Nice: kmnice2013@gmail.com / 07708 064294

**Hall Hire:** baldockchurchhall@gmail.com

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Next week’s readings: Jeremiah 31:7-14, Psalm 147, Ephesians 1:3-14, John 1 [1-9] 10-18

**CCLI number: 752089**