

Singing Carols at Tesco Welling on Saturday 6th December 10.15am—12noon. Raising money for the Greenwich & Bexley Community Hospice. All welcome to join in!

Come and sing Carols with the other churches in Welling next to the cannon / Christmas tree at Welling Corner – a chance to *Shine our Light* together! On Saturday 13th December 2pm – 3pm. Carol sheets provided – just come along and join in. All welcome.

St Stephen’s School *Christmas Tea Party* on Tuesday 16th December at 10.30am in the school hall. All parishioners welcomed to join us for a festive celebration and enjoy a cup of tea & cake in a relaxed and friendly setting with carol singing.

Readers for Christmas Masses: If you would like to read at our Christmas Masses– *24th Dec 6pm, midnight Mass 12pm, 25th Dec 9.30am & 11.30am, 26th Dec 10am*—please sign the sheet on the table at the back of the church. Only our parish commissioned readers on the regular rota to sign up please. Many thanks.

Eucharistic Ministers for Christmas Masses: Please sign the sheet at the back of church if you would like to minister at our Christmas Masses.

Funeral Dates:
Peter Ward: Wednesday 17th December at 11am.
Joao Colaco: Thursday 18th December at 11am.
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen

Volunteers Needed to help decorate the church for Christmas on Friday 19th December from 4pm. Please come along to lend a hand.

Christmas Carol Service on *Saturday 20th December at 3pm* in church followed by refreshments in the parish hall. This is always a very joyful occasion. Please mark the date in your calendar. Please feel free to speak to the Sunday Mass choir leaders for more information.
Choir practice on Saturdays at 10.45am in the small hall.

St George’s Cathedral Carol Service on 9th December at 7.30pm. Join Archbishop John and the beautiful St George’s Cathedral Choir. All are welcome so please invite family and friends to join us.

CAFOD Advent Carol Service: Dr Christine Allen, CAFOD Director, invites you to CAFOD's annual Advent Carol Service at St George’s Cathedral on Wednesday 10th December followed by drinks and mince pies. All welcome.

Fire and Accidents: In the case of a fire in church or in the parish hall please evacuate the building immediately and report to the assembly point in the car park by the school fence (Assembly Point sign on fence facing the church & hall).
There is a First Aid box in church (sacristy) and in the parish hall (kitchen) including an accident report book. Please note that any slips, trips, falls or accidents must be logged in the report book and the parish office must be notified as soon as possible.

Bexley Foodbank: Christmas sweet treats—e.g. chocolates, biscuits, mince pies etc. will be gratefully appreciated by their needy customers. Please put your donations in the box in the porch by **Thursday 18th December** so your food gifts can reach the customers in time for Christmas. Your support and generosity is much appreciated.
Also, a list of urgently wanted items can be found at <https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/> as well as a list of not needed items—thank you. Donations of strong ‘bags for life’ are wanted—please put any spare bags you have in the donation box. Thank you.

Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament weekdays from 9am. Please join us.

Rooted in Love is a programme for married and engaged couples to meet online monthly, where we share friendship, reflect on real-life topics, and pray together as we grow in love rooted in Christ on 11th December at 8.30pm. Further dates will be available in January 2026. Email mflkent@rcaos.org.uk to sign up or receive more information.

Prayer Intentions Book: Parishioners are invited to write any prayer intentions in our Parish Prayer Intentions book which is placed on the table at the back of the church. Please take time to read the intentions and include them in your prayers.

Join our Mailing List: To receive our weekly newsletter by email please email wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk to subscribe, include your name and confirm your consent to receive our newsletter. You can unsubscribe at any time by notifying the parish office. Your email address will not be shared and used only to receive our newsletter.



ST. STEPHEN’S CHURCH

26 DEEPDENE ROAD, WELLING, KENT DA16 3QL ☒ Telephone: 020 8303 4422
Parish Priest: Canon Edward Perera
website: www.saintstephens.co.uk. Email: welling@rcaos.org.uk
Secretary: Mrs. Lorraine Harris. email: wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk

School: St. Stephen’s Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Welling. Kent. DA16 3QG
Telephone: 020 8303 9738

Second Sunday of Advent (Year A)		
Saturday 6th December		
5pm	Francis Abreo RIP	
Sunday 7th November		
9.30am	Patrick Hartley RIP	(M Rush)
11.30am	People of the Parish	
Mon 8th The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary		
10am	Neil Murphy RIP	(T Vertanness)
Tues 9th Feria		
10am	Birthday B Paguntalan	
7pm	Peter Edwards	
Novena Prayers		
Wed 10th Feria		
10am	Kathleen Denahy	
Thurs 11th Feria		
10am	Deceased Members of The Dillon Family (M Mulvihill)	
Fri 12th Feria		
10am	Jovita Dias RIP—2nd anniv	
Sat 13th St Lucy, Martyr		
10am	Priest Ints	
Sacrament of Reconciliation		
10.30am—11am & 4pm—4.30pm		
Third Sunday of Advent (Year A)		
Saturday 13th December		
5pm	Louiza Lobo—thanksgiving birthday	
Sunday 14th December		
9.30am	People of the Parish	
11.30am	Canon Jeremiah McCarthy	
Please remember in your prayers the sick and housebound; at home, in hospital or in residential care.		

DONATIONS
All donations are greatly appreciated to help support our church & parish. Thank you.
The offertory collection after the Liturgy of the Word during Mass on Saturday evening & Sunday morning is for parishioners who wish to donate with their gift aid envelopes or with loose cash. If you choose to donate via the digital plate in church, online or by standing order, please continue to do so—there is no need to change your chosen method of giving. The collection bag will also be circulated for second collections.
Support our parish and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to www.rcaos.org.uk/media/xfqfyxyj/welling-planned-giving-and-gift-aid-form.pdf Paper copies of the form are available on the table at the back of the church. You can also join the gift aid scheme by completing an online form at https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid . Donate online at https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236 or https://justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport —please include parish name and location. To set up a standing order to make regular monthly donations see bank details below.
NatWest Bank Sort Code: 51-70-14 Account No. 39013332 Account Name: RCAS Welling Please use your name as a reference Thank you.
Digital Collection Plates are situated at the back of the church. Your donation can be gift aided by completing a digital Gift Aid Declaration on the Digital Collection Plate screen (name, address and email address required) and all future donations you make using this card will automatically be recorded as a gift aid donation. A Gift Aid Declaration is required when using the Digital Collection Plate for the first time even if you are registered for Gift Aid at St Stephen’s.

<p>My dear people</p> <p>We have begun a new liturgical year and this year our Gospel readings will be from the Gospel of Matthew. As we greet the evangelist Matthew, I thought of sharing a few introductory thoughts on the gospel of Matthew, which I hope will help us.</p> <p>Scripture scholars agree that Mark was the first of the Gospels to be written. Mark’s gospel most probably was written sometime between 65 and 75 AD. Matthew wrote his gospel possibly between 80 and 90 AD.</p> <p>Matthew uses almost about 90% of Mark’s gospel in his Gospel, but also adds a lot more. When we look at the structure of Mark’s Gospel, Mark begins with an adult Jesus. There is no infancy narrative in Mark. He gives a brief introduction to the public ministry of Jesus and this is followed by Jesus’ Galilean ministry. Then we find Jesus and the disciples on their way to Jerusalem for the celebration of the Passover. When Jesus arrives in Jerusalem Mark gives us a day-by-day account of the last week in the life of Jesus.</p> <p>God Bless you and love you all. Canon Edward</p>	<p>Matthew keeps this basic structure of Mark but adds a lot more. Keeping the basic structure of Mark, Matthew arranges the teachings of Jesus into five major sermons or discourses —Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5-7), Mission discourse (Chapter 10), Parables (Chapter 13), Community instructions (Chapter 18) and eschatological teaching (Chapters 24 & 25), part of which we heard last Sunday.</p> <p>Matthew begins with the genealogy of Jesus and the infancy narrative. Followed by the account of his birth. It’s Matthew who tells us about the arrival of the magi. Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt and after the death of Herod they return to Galilee and settle down in Nazareth.</p> <p>Matthew then passes over the infancy of Jesus to his baptism after which Jesus is lead into the desert to be tested by the devil. Jesus returns to Galilee and begins his ministry preaching repentance. Today as we meet John the Baptist we read the introduction to the public ministry of Jesus.</p>
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Second Sunday in Advent (Year A)

Scripture Insights

Isaiah imagines on that day a restoration of the harmony of the original creation before the fall: the cow and bear raising their children together as peaceable neighbours, not as predator and prey. This text from Isaiah thus looks past the first coming of Christ to his second, when God’s eternal, eschatological kingdom of peace will be established. The Isaiah text concludes with a vision of all the nations seeking the glorious dwelling of the Davidic king, foreshadowing the inclusion of the Gentiles into God’s promises.

While Paul reassures the Christians in Rome that God has not broken his covenant with Israel, John the Baptist warns the Jewish leaders that the covenant had always required them to “produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance” (Mt 3:8), not merely to claim Abraham as their ancestor. Jesus’ baptism “with the Holy Spirit and fire” points both to Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descends in wind and fire, and to Christ’s role as the coming judge.

Reflections

• It’s never easy to hear that we are wrong, especially when it means we have to do something differently. This was true for the followers of John the Baptist, as well. John told his followers to repent, change their ways in preparation for the coming of the kingdom of God. As would be the case today, some hear John’s proclamation and transformed their thoughts, words, and deeds. Others might have heard and ignored the call to conversion. The power of conversion is that it cannot

be forced. Conversion must be freely given.

• As we continue our journey through this Advent season, how do you respond when you hear the words of John the Baptist? Do you take notice of the areas in your own life where you might need conversion? Are you aware of the ways God calls you to growth and transformation? The choice is yours as you prepare for the celebration of the Incarnation.

Introduction to Mass

The Prophet Isaiah foretold the day when God would send a new kind of king to his people, one who would rule with justice and wisdom and one who would be filled with the spirit of the Lord himself. John the Baptist heralded the arrival of this just ruler in our Lord, Jesus Christ. Let us heed John’s call to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ by reflecting upon our misdeeds and asking for the Lord’s forgiveness.

Liturgy and Life

As we know, the Advent season is countercultural. It is a time of anticipation, hope, and preparation—three things we are not very good at today. We would rather possess than anticipate. We accept twenty- nine minutes of grim evening news with just one hope-filled story at the end. We accumulate conveniences to eliminate the care-filled preparation that once marked domestic life. If we want to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, we need to make some intentional shifts this season.



LTP Sourcebook 2025

Repository: Advent candles and calendars, Christmas cards, calendars, candles, children’s Christmas books and Christmas Mass Bouquet cards on sale now in the Repository. Please take time to visit after weekend Masses. (cash only please).

First Saturday Devotions including praying the Rosary together at 9.20am in church. Please join us on 6th December.

Archbishop John’s Advent 2025 reflection. This Advent, Archbishop John is calling us on to reflect on the “astonishing truth” that the “Lord Jesus is, and always will be, Emmanuel: God with us, God beside us, God within us”. In a [video reflection](#), Archbishop John said that: “to say God is with us is not poetry but power. It means that the Lord Jesus stepped into our humanity so that we might step into his divinity. It means that God is no distant deity, but one who draws near; who shares our joys and carries our sorrows; who opens heaven to earth, and earth to heaven”. You can watch his full reflection at [rcaos.org.uk/advent2025](#).

Southwark Spirituality Commission Advent reflections. The [Southwark Spirituality Commission](#) will be sending daily reflections during Advent featuring Scripture, thoughts and prayers. Sign-up to receive them directly into your inbox each morning via [tinyurl.com/SSCAdvent2025](#). These reflections are a great way to keep your mind focused on the Lord Jesus during the busy Advent season.

A Day With Mary on Saturday 20th December starting at 9.20am and finish at 5.30pm at Our Lady Help of Christians, Blackheath SE3 9RD. During the day: Confession & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Please bring a packed lunch. For more info see poster or go to [www adaywithmary.org](#)

Mass Intentions: If you would like to offer a Mass for an intention, please use the Mass Intention Envelopes available at the back of the church and post it through the presbytery letterbox. Please ensure you include your contact number. The recommended stipend (donation) advised by the Archdiocese for a Mass Intention is £10. Please give plenty of notice to avoid disappointment if you would like specific date for your intention as we may not always be able to accommodate your request at short notice (at least 6 months notice is recommended). If you are a UK tax payer please complete the Gift Aid declaration on the reverse of the envelope. Cheques made payable to ‘RCAS Welling’. Thank you.

Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday in the parish hall between the 2 morning Masses. Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed.

Called to Bear Fruit consultation response published. Please take a booklet from the table at the back of the church home to read.

Thank you to the thousands of people who took part in the Called to Bear Fruit consultation. We are grateful to you all for sharing so openly your hopes for the life of the Church in our Archdiocese. The consultation response, which includes 15 actions points for renewal, is also available at [rcaos.org.uk/calledtobearfruit](#). The consultation revealed a burning desire within our parishes to be missionary and evangelising disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, who work together to help people encounter His love. So, as we move forward on the next steps together, let’s build up the Body of Christ in Southwark with faith and confidence, becoming ever more a community of missionary disciples filled with joy and hope for the future. As an Archdiocese, we will continue to discern the process of renewal, and further updates will be provided in due course.

The Jubilee Year concludes in just four weeks. There is still time to visit the designated shrines and churches across the archdiocese and to receive the plenary indulgence. For a full list of places: [https://rcaos.org.uk/faith/jubilee-2025/designated-jubilee-churches-and-shrines/](#)

Church Decoration: If you would like to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the recent decoration work in church, the meeting room and new hall doors please contact the parish office. Cash / cheque donations can be posted through the presbytery letterbox in a sealed envelope with ‘*Church Decoration*’ written on the front (cheques made payable to ‘RCAS Welling’). Donations can also be made on the Digital Collection Plates at the back of the church and online at [https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236](#) or use the church bank account details on the front page of the newsletter (use reference: Church Decs). Your support is important and deeply appreciated. If you are able, please gift aid your donation. Thank you.

Support our parish and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to [https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid](#).