



epping
team ministry

NEWS

CELEBRATE, SHARE AND GROW IN CHRIST

Sunday, 14th December 2025, Advent 3

Isaiah 35.1-10; James 5.7-10; Matthew 11.2-11

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ SERVICES IN THE TEAM FOR THIS WEEK ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

SUNDAY

8:00 am BCP HOLY COMMUNION, St John's Epping

9:20 am MORNING WORSHIP FOR ADVENT, St John's Epping

With the band.

11:10 am PARISH COMMUNION, All Saints Epping Upland

4:00 pm NATIVITY AND CAROL SERVICE, St Alban's Coopersale

6:00 pm SUNG COMPLINE (Night Prayer), St John's Epping

MONDAY

8:45 am MORNING PRAYER, St John's Epping

TUESDAY

8:45 am MORNING PRAYER, St John's Epping

9:30 am HOLY COMMUNION, St John's Epping

THURSDAY

10:00 am CHURCH MICE, St John's Epping

The last Church Mice for 2025 will be this week (18th December) and the first for 2026 will be 8th January.

ST JOHN'S IS OPEN DAILY FOR PRIVATE PRAYER,
except Bank Holidays or other specific occasions.

The Reflection is on the following page

Please consider switching your mobile phone to silent mode or switching it off before a Sunday service begins and taking a moment to pray that we may all be fully present with each other and with Christ.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

John the Baptist

When I was a medical student I often used to see a man, whose name I now know was Stanley Green, who used to walk up and down Oxford Street with billboards. From a distance I assumed that these boards said things like 'the end of the world is nigh' or 'flee from the wrath that is to come' but in fact he was trying to 'spread the word' about vegetarianism and about how good it was for individuals and for the world. One of my friends bought one of his leaflets but we didn't find it very inspiring! I wonder if people who heard and saw John the Baptist felt drawn and alienated by him in the same way.

Take yourself back to 30 AD. You are living in first century Palestine as a Jew and you have been waiting for the Messiah to come and transform your life. It's 400 years since a prophet spoke about the coming of the Messiah and God seems to be silent. Of course, He is sort of there in the synagogue but it really feels as if He has abandoned His people. Then you hear someone talking about a man in the wilderness saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near'. This man looks a bit weird, just dressed in a camel skin and apparently living on locusts and honey, but people seem to be flocking to be baptised by him. Some of them came back saying that he had also said, 'I baptise you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' Would you be tempted to go and see what was going on, to see if you could make sense of it?

As we look back at John the Baptist and the coming of our Saviour, it is easy to miss the real wonder and message of those times. God had not forgotten His people, He has come to redeem them fully, but not in the way that they expected. As we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Baby in Bethlehem, may we look at it all afresh, seeing what new truths God wants to teach us. And may we also be lights of love and hope in a world that often seems dark and bleak

Diana

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Isaiah 35, 1 – 10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

James 5, 7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! 10 As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 11, 2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?'

Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I

tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

----- **FOR OUR PRAYERS DURING THE WEEK** -----

Monday	For the congregation and parish of St John's, Epping.
Tuesday	For the families of all those killed in the tower blocks fire in Hong Kong.
Wednesday	For peace in the world and the end of oppression.
Thursday	For all pupils and staff of Epping St John's School.
Friday	For the Ministry Team, especially for our Rector; for all who contribute to, or lead, our services: for those who lead our meetings, those who carry out 'behind the scenes' activities and those who help fundraising in the Team churches.

Those who are sick and for whom prayers have been asked:

Graham, June, Caroline, Harriet Breen, David, Jean Goldsmith, Rebecca Salmon, Ted Owen, Sam Chard.

Please note that names will appear here for a short time only, unless the request to the Team Office is repeated.

Those who have died recently, their family and friends:

Basil Corea, Emma Macisz-Lawrence.

Those whose anniversary of death occurs during this week:

7th December, Florence Atkins; 8th, Faith Baldwin, Basil Townsend, Beryl King, Robin Stevens, Madge Smith, Patrick Basset; 9th, George Dickinson, Pamela Levy, Joan Harris; 10th, Frederick Pritchard, Alice Forrest, Edmund King, Vera Flack, David Nagle, Vera Griffiths; 11th, Philip Whittome, Sally Macpherson, Dorothy Purkiss, Cyril Crabb; 12th, Robert Rolke, David Goulding, Herbert Griffiths; 13th, Ernest Wythes, Henry Silwood, Dennis Coote, Dennis Ramshaw.

COLLECT for this Sunday.

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen

----- **FOR YOUR INFORMATION** -----

THE NEW BEREAVEMENT JOURNEY Steve and Diana will be running this from 14th January 2026 in **St John's** church from 10:30 am - noon. It is designed for anyone who feels they would benefit from support in their bereavement. Sessions involve 2 films, group discussion, homemade cake and coffee. The course is designed for anyone, not just church goers. Please speak to Diana for more information.

CRAFT GROUP next meet in **St John's** on **28th January 2026**, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

MINDFUL ART is a free painting session in **St John's** church from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The next session is Monday 12th January 2026.

ST JOHN'S FLOWER GUILD will be collecting donations for the Christmas floral decorations today. Thank you for your support.

THE CRIB SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS EVE in **St John's** is fast approaching. If your child would like to be involved in this service, please be at the 9:20 am Sunday Services at St John's and the children will be going out together for practicing the Crib Service. After the 9:20 am service at St John's next week (Sunday 21st) we will be doing a dress rehearsal for the Crib Service. If your child has a part in the Crib Service it would be great to see them there. If they're not able to attend then please let me know. Thanks, Emily

HYMN BOOKS AT ST JOHN'S are now in use, but should you wish to receive a copy of the hymns by email to enable you to vary the size of the text yourself, please contact Lisa in the Team Office, but large print copies are available – please ask.

NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK Thursday 1st January, to set out 1:30 pm, maximum 2.5 miles. Start at Skips Corner, North Weald (just up from School Green Lane crossing lights on the High Road). Park in SGL or Thornhill. Come dressed for cold and wet; wellies recommended. Bring hot drinks & nibbles. Children & dogs on leads welcome. Voluntary donation to Heart of Epping project. Roger Lowry 07962813240

THANKS We are so thankful for each and everyone of you. For all your astounding generosity with your time, donations, prayer and sheer hard graft, that has made this year's Tree Festival such a joyous and successful community event. Thanks to each and everyone of you.
Kate and Cathy

THANKYOU from The Royal British Legion; the collections in St John's Church this year total just over £300.00.

NEWS over the Christmas Season. The NEWS next week will cover three weeks, including all readings collects and Reflections; please send me any item for that period. Thanks, Geoff

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ FROM THE TEAM RECTOR ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

SERVICES FOR NEXT SUNDAY, 21st December 2025, Advent 4

8:00 am Holy Communion (BCP) at **St John's** Epping

9:20 am Sung Communion at **St John's** Epping

11:10 am Holy Communion at **St Alban's** Coopersale

3:00 pm **Carol Service** at **All Saints** Epping Upland

6:00 pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at **St John's** Epping.

READINGS: Isaiah 7.10-16; Romans 1.1-7; Matthew 1.18-end

SUPPORTING THOSE LIVING IN THE BELL. The local Care4Calais group are very grateful for clothes donated to the residents at the Bell Hotel, and also for some suited for the families at the Phoenix in North Weald. Further donations of clothing, particularly small and medium sized items, are welcome. The collection box for clothes is in **St John's** Church.

WARM COATS- Do you have a spare, warm winter coat in good condition ? If so would you consider donating it and adding it to the coat rail? This is now in place in **St John's** Church porch. Many thanks in advance! (Pastoral Care Team)

NEWS FOR ST JOHN'S. As announced before, the members of the Fabric Committee have sadly decided to step down from their roles. The PCC is therefore looking to explore whether there are those among the congregation who might have the skill and feel themselves called by God to this important ministry, assisting our Churchwardens in routine church maintenance. To find out more about what is involved, please do speak to our Rector, a Churchwarden or a PCC member.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ PLEDGED GIVING AND COLLECTIONS ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

There are many ways to financially support the mission and ministry of the parishes. We are grateful for the many ways and forms of giving which express our shared worship of Christ.

COLLECTIONS IN SUNDAY SERVICES: A cash collection is taken at Sunday and midweek services. Please don't feel any embarrassment to let it pass you by.

PARISH GIVING SCHEME (PGS): Similar to direct debit payments but set up an account by calling PGS on 0333 002 1271 providing your bank details plus your church PGS code which is:

Epping Upland, All Saints-0806-08029

Epping, St John the Baptist-0806-08028

Coopersale, St Alban the Martyr-0806-08027

BACS You can give to church by bank transfer; the sort codes and account numbers are listed here:

St Alban's 20-29-86, Account: 50776459

St John's 20-29-86, Account: 50357219

All Saints 60-07-39, Account 50236520

EPPIING TEAM MINISTRY CONTACT DETAILS

Team Clergy **Revd John Fry:** Team Rector 01992 934355
E-mail: teamrector@eppinganglicans.org.uk

Revd Jessica Bostock: Associate Minister,
3 Sundays a month and Mondays.
E-mail: jessicabostock@yahoo.co.uk

Dr Liz Gloyn: Curate,
E-mail: curate@eppinganglicans.org.uk

LLMs	Diana Lowry: Email: lowryepp@gmail.com	01992 279696
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Steve Snooks: 01992 572185
Email: stevesnooks@hotmail.com

Team Pastoral Assistant, Jo Waller:
Email: jo.waller37@btinternet .com

Children, Youth and Family Worker, Emily Townshend:
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
E-mail: cyf@eppinganglicans.org.uk

Church Wardens for Epping Upland and Coopersale, please contact the Team Office.

For **St John's**, contact **Marian Winters** at 07790 532570, email marianwinters@aol.com or **Sara McLean** at 07768 106406, email sdmclean@virginmedia.com

Team Administrator: Lisa Bazzoni 01992 579935
E-mail: teamadmin@eppinganglicans.org.uk

NEWS items for next week; **Geoff Scanlan** 01992 576550
E-mail: rosandgeoff@btinternet.com

Please send us any prayer requests, or if you would like someone to pray for you.

St John's has a 'T' loop: please ask for help if you need it.

MOBILITY AIDS are at the back of **St John's** for use in church.

You can follow **St John's, All Saints** and **St Alban's** on **Facebook**

WE ARE A MEMBER OF VOLUNTARY ACTION EPPING FOREST