

50th

HOLY TRINITY SOUTH CHATHAM

Parish Newsletter - Issue No. 96

February 2026

St Alban's, Blue Bell Hill, St David's, Lordswood,
and St William's, Walderslade



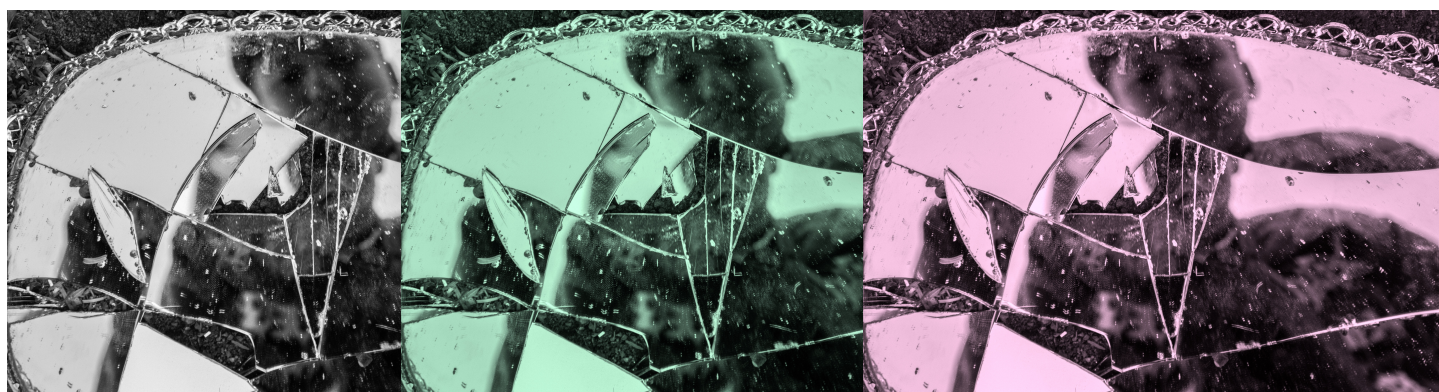
‘Confirm your humanity!’

I was asked to confirm my humanity the other day on a website, the name of which now escapes my memory. You may have experienced the same request at some point: please ‘confirm your humanity’ by looking at a photograph divided into a grid and selecting the squares with traffic lights or bicycles; or by identifying letters and numbers; or, even more bizarrely, by ticking a box. Oh, the irony of being asked to confirm our humanity by computer software, as if computer software were able to properly judge!

We are living in a world of internet bots and Artificial Intelligence which makes it increasingly difficult to discern reality and human agency in cyber-

space. The more that technology advances and communication is transfigured from face-to-face encounters into this ether-world the more pressing the need to confirm our humanity seems to become.

Families used to gather communally; telling stories and singing songs; sharing traditions from one generation to the next. Now it is possible to avoid relatives altogether and sink into a world of isolation and artificial adventure, choosing our own traditions and futures. But this piece was not meant to be about the ethics of AI or virtual reality. That is just the deeply immersive cultural backdrop in which we find ourselves. I am, however, moved by that online command: ‘confirm your humanity’.



The season we are about to enter provides an opportunity to respond. The fun and festivity of Christmas and Epiphany are over and we march into Lent. The liturgy of Ash Wednesday powerfully states: *'Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.'* There are three touchstones of humanity listed in these sentences that I doubt any computer software would be able to recognize: dust, sin and redemption.

Dust — We are formed from primordial matter ('Adam' in Hebrew means earth). We are flesh and blood animated by the breath of God. Nobody made themselves; we cannot author our own origin-story and the control we have over the events of our lives is limited: 'The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps' (Proverbs 16.9).

Sin — Failure and fragility are hallmarks of our humanity; our natural state, if you will. '...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' Romans 3.23. Imperfection lies at the heart of every sphere of human enterprise whether individual or communal including, especially, our virtual existence. That is why I believe, contrary to some, that technology is far from being ethically neutral.

Redemption — Alexander Pope wrote, 'To err is human, to forgive is divine'. Thanks be to God that the Risen Christ stands among us. His death on the cross opens the way of forgiveness. Fallen dust and sinful nature may sometimes define our horizons, almost to the point of excess, but there is redemption. Jesus invites us into a life of faith.

Repentance is perhaps the most appropriate response to the call to 'confirm our humanity'; our worship and lenten disciplines recalibrating our hearts and minds. May these final words inform our spiritual posture as Lent begins:

'Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools...

Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few.' (Ecclesiastes 5.1 & 2)

Rev. David Kitchenside
Team Rector

Worship in February 2026

Sunday 1 February (Candlemas)

10am **Morning Worship** at St David's, Lordswood

Wednesday 4 February

10am **Holy Communion** at St William's, Walderslade

Sunday 8 February (2 Before Lent)

10am **Holy Communion** at St William's, Walderslade

Sunday 15 February (Sunday Before Lent)

10am **Morning Worship** at St Alban's, Blue Bell Hill

10am *Family Vibes* at St David's, Lordswood

Wednesday 18 February (Ash Wednesday)

10am **Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes**
at St Alban's, Blue Bell Hill

Sunday 22 February (Lent 1)

10am **Holy Communion** at St David's, Lordswood

On the Social side

Coffee & Cake at St David's on the second Friday of each month between 10.30am and 12pm.
Next date: **13 February**.

Tea at Three at St William's on the third Monday of each month at 3pm. Next date: **16 February**.



Sharing a joke at 'Tea at Three'!

Holy Communion & Coffee Morning at St Alban's on the third Wednesday of each month. In February the date coincides with Ash Wednesday so the Communion service will include the imposition of ashes. Date: **18 February** (worship at 10am, refreshments from 10.30am).

Cornerstone Coffeeshop at St William's in Walderslade Village is open most days throughout the week; **Monday - Friday** 10am - 2pm and **Saturdays** from 9am. Offering fresh coffee, tea, delicious homemade cakes, paninis, toasties and homemade soup.

People of the Parish

In January, we started Alpha a course designed to explore questions of life, faith and spirituality. A fantastic team of volunteers were recruited to lead including Brad and Esther Cook who Ann Bengner has interviewed for us this month.

Ages: 46 and 44

Family: Two daughters and a dog.

We met doing A Levels at Chatham Grammar for Boys.

Role in Holy Trinity:

Hosting the Alpha Course

Employment:

Esther is an elected Councillor employed by Medway Council and

would like to encourage other Christians to be involved. She also delivers teacher training.

Brad is heading HR for the Church of England.

What is your favourite food?

Brad: Curry. Esther: Something Italian.

Favourite Bible verses

Brad: 'He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6.8)

Esther: 'It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.' (Colossians 1.28-29)

Favourite hymns:

Brad: *Gather Round the Cross*

Esther: *We Seek Your Kingdom*

Favourite holiday destination:

The Algarve, Portugal.



In our prayers

We remember before God:

- our world; both developed and developing countries where there is injustice, pain, suffering and sorrow
- His Majesty King Charles III and the UK Government
- the Methodist Southeast District, the churches of the North Kent Methodist Circuit
- Rochester Diocese, our Bishops, and the parishes of this Deanery
- the guests and leaders involved with Alpha
- those in hospital and those waiting scans, operations or treatment
- for couples recently married, for Jack Leech and Marcia Ware and those preparing for their wedding day and future life together
- those preparing for baptism and their families.
- the family of Michael Alabi and all those who have lost loved ones recently.

Dates: February 2025

Alpha CONTINUES! at St David's on Sundays 1, 8, 15 & 22 February between 4pm and 5.30pm

Midweek Communion at Woodlands Court on Monday 2 February at 6.30pm

NEW! Midweek Communion in the Chapel at St William's on Wednesday 4 February at 10am

Cornerstone Management Committee at St William's on Wednesday 4 February at 7.30pm

Trinity Prayers in the Chapel at St David's on Thursday 5 February at 7.30pm

Woodlands Study Group (Residents only) at Woodlands Court on Mondays 9 & 23 February at 11am

Bible Study Group in the Chapel at St David's on Mondays 9 & 23 February at 2.30pm

Deanery Synod on Tuesday 10 February at 7.30pm

Family Vibes Review Meeting at 26 Mayford Road on Thursday 12 February at 7.30pm

Wardens Plus at 26 Mayford Road on Monday 16 February at 9.30am

Michael Oladosu Alabi RIP — Service of Songs at St William's on Thursday 19 February at 5pm followed by **Funeral Service** at St William's on Friday 20 February at 10.30am

Alpha 2026: Holy Spirit Day at St Benedict's Centre, Malling Abbey on Saturday 21 February

Buildings Sub-Committee in the Chapel at St David's on Wednesday 25 February at 7.30pm

Service Leaders and Preachers Review Meeting at 26 Mayford Road on 26 February at 7.30pm (TBC)

Last but not least! The **Browse and Buy Sale** at St David's from 10am on Saturday 28 February at 9.30am

Reading & Praying

Candlemas — 1 February

*Leviticus 12.1-8, Psalm 48.1-3, 9-14
1 John 5.1-5 & Luke 2.22-38*



Lord Jesus Christ,
light of the nations and glory
of Israel;
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy
to your heavenly Father,
your God, and our God. **Amen.**

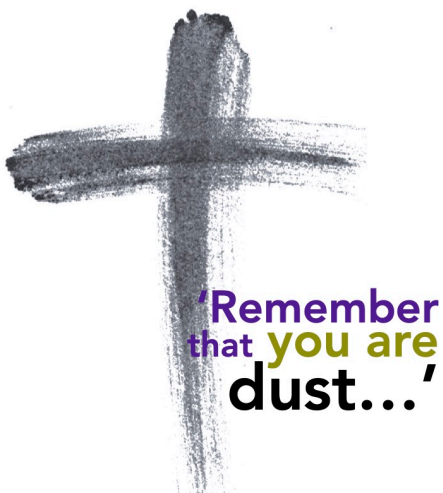
2 Before Lent — 8 February

*Song of Songs 4.9-15,
Psalm 45.6-10, 12-15,
1 Corinthians 9.1-10 &
John 2.1-12*

God of heaven,
you sent the gospel to the ends of
the earth
and your messengers to every nation:
send your Holy Spirit to transform us
by the good news of everlasting life in
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sunday Before Lent — 15 February

*1 Kings 17.8-16, Psalm 146
James 1.22-27 & Luke 4.16-27*



Holy God,
you know the disorder of our
sinful lives:
set straight our crooked hearts,
and bend our wills to love your
goodness and your glory
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Ash Wednesday — 18 February

*Joel 2.1, 12-17, 21-22,
Psalm 90.1-10, 12
1 Corinthians 15.45-49 &
Matthew 6.1-12*

Holy God
our lives are laid before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of you Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lent 1 — 22 February

*Genesis 2.7-9, 15-25,
Psalm 104.1-4, 10-15, 27-30,
Colossians 3.1-11 &
Mark 16.9-15*

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers
of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in
wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Keeping in contact

More information about the Parish is available via weekly emails which you can sign-up to receive from our website, achurchnearyou.com/Holy-Trinity-South-Chatham, or by using the QR code below. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Team Rector: Rev. David Kichenside 01634 862265 david.kichenside@gmail.com
(Rest Day: Saturday)

Team Curate: Rev. Ann Ruby 07565 402121 reverendann@hotmail.com
(Parish Days: Wednesdays and Sundays)

Church Wardens
Pat Long 01634 309180
Barry Horwell 01634 308552

Pro-Warden & Gift Aid Officer Pauline Bowdery 01634 669215

Church Steward Sylvia Wigglesworth 01634 683789

Parish Safeguarding Officer Mark Salter 07719 183940

Prayer Co-ordinator Mary Horwell 01634 308552
maryhorwell@blueyonder.co.uk

Church Bookings Jean Small 01634 315106

www.achurchnearyou.com/Holy-Trinity-South-Chatham

@southchatham on Facebook and @htscuk on Instagram



HOLY TRINITY SOUTH CHATHAM

One church of St Alban, St David and St William serving Blue Bell Hill, Lords Wood and Walderslade.
A partnership between the Church of England and the Methodist Church

Registered Charity No. 1135416

