

## Parish Newsletter - Issue No. 96

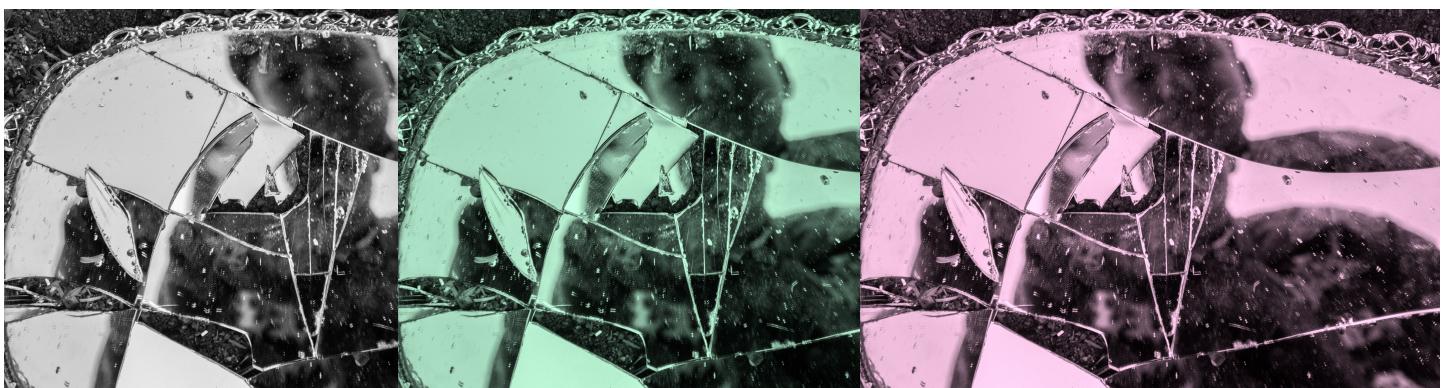
February 2026

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 us 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 Benger 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 your 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](http://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](mailto:david.kichenside@gmail.com)  
(Rest Day: Saturday)

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

<b>Church Wardens</b>	Pat Long	01634 309180
	Barry Horwell	01634 308552
<b>Pro-Warden &amp; Gift Aid Officer</b>	Pauline Bowdery	01634 669215
<b>Church Steward</b>	Sylvia Wrigglesworth	01634 683789
<b>Parish Safeguarding Officer</b>	Mark Salter	07719 183940
<b>Prayer Co-ordinator</b>	Mary Horwell	01634 308552 <a href="mailto:maryhorwell@blueyonder.co.uk">maryhorwell@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
<b>Church Bookings</b>	Jean Small	01634 315106

[www.achurchnearyou.com/Holy-Trinity-South-Chatham](http://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



**The Methodist Church**

